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VENICE.

Drawn by Thomas Kay. Engraved by H. Watkinson.

(See p. 240.)



THE GENIUS OF COLERIDGE.*

BY C. E. TYRER, B.A.

"THIS great man," says Mr. Swinburne of Coleridge, "seems to me a figure more utterly companionless, more incomparable with others, than any of his kind." And some sense of his solitary greatness, his aloofness even from the circle of great and distinguished men, who were his friends and contemporaries, must, I think, be borne in upon any thoughtful student of his life and work. For Coleridge was not in any true sense a child of the modern spirit. Endowed with the profoundest sense of religion, with an intellect capable of assimilating all learning human and divine, with a heart overflowing with the tenderest affections, with an imagination that "glanced from earth to heaven," and seemed to embrace all being, actual and possible, in its mighty sweep, and with the most exquisite gift of melodious verse, he should have lived—one thinks—in some more peaceful era of the world's history than that season of political tempest and speculative gloom and uncertainty into which he was born, and in which we all—unhappy denizens of the nineteenth century—must bear our humble part. As has been said of Lamb, so too of Coleridge the rightful sphere would seem to have been "the spacious times of great Elizabeth;" and if we could picture to ourselves Spenser

* Coleridge. By H. D. Traill. London: Macmillan & Co. 1884.

and Hooker or Jeremy Taylor rolled into one, we might conceive to some extent what Coleridge would have been amid his compeers of that great and glorious time. So one thinks sometimes, contemplating the sad failures of his life, its many beginnings, its scanty achievements ; but perhaps there was some fatal defect in his nature, which would have marred the happiest circumstances, and, at any rate, while regretting that we have no more, while feeling with sorrow that both his life and his life's work were in some sense a failure, we may well be grateful, deeply grateful, for what he has left us.

Considerable interest has been recently revived in Coleridge by the appearance of Mr. Traill's monograph. Mr. Traill is well known as possessing one of the keenest intellects, and as the master of one of the most brilliant and trenchant styles among contemporary men of letters, and great things were therefore expected of this book. Nor were those expectations altogether disappointed, though the ardent Coleridgean has reason perhaps to complain of several points in the treatment of his hero. Except as a critic, especially a literary critic—in which character Mr. Traill allows him to have achieved a pre-eminent position—he is on the whole rather chary of his praise. This is especially the case with his treatment of Coleridge's metaphysics and theology, and perhaps it is not so much that Mr. Traill has contested the soundness of Coleridge's philosophical position as the very subordinate value which he assigns to this side of his intellectual activity, which has moved the wrath of his disciples. Mr. Traill's keenly intellectual nature, and his evident distaste for transcendental or preternatural conceptions, would naturally render him an unsympathetic critic of Coleridge's philosophico-religious views. And this is even seen in his dislike, or, at least, indifference to the mystical element in his poetry. All poets are mystics—Coleridge

was so in an eminent degree, and his philosophical system (if system it may be called) was perhaps as much the outcome of his moral and emotional as of his strictly intellectual nature.

To discuss in any adequate way the genius of Coleridge, in all its varied aspects, would be a task, not for a single essay, but for a treatise. "Myriad-minded," he somewhere calls Shakspeare, and to no Englishman perhaps, save our immortal dramatist himself, can that term be so fittingly applied as to Coleridge. Perhaps Goethe alone, among the moderns, had a genius so nearly universal. But although by his philosophy Coleridge influenced profoundly some of the ablest and most thoughtful of his younger contemporaries, although the wonderful subtlety of his literary criticism places him in the forefront of that department, yet it is probably by his highest snatches of verse—scanty in amount as those fragments are—that he makes his surest and most enduring claim to a place among the world's immortals. After three such admirable critics as Mr. Swinburne, Mr. Pater, and Mr. Traill, have given their estimate of the poetry of Coleridge, it may seem presumptuous to add anything to their criticisms; and the remarks I shall make are offered, therefore, with the greatest diffidence, as a humble contribution to the subject.

I propose to consider the poems of Coleridge according to the three chronological divisions or groups (in which they naturally arrange themselves), and afterwards to offer a few general observations on the character of his poetic genius. These divisions are respectively Poems of Youth, of Early Manhood, of Middle and Later Life; which again may be taken as roughly corresponding with the periods of growth, maturity, and decay. This arrangement differs from that followed in the edition of the poems edited by the poet's son and daughter, Derwent and

Sara Coleridge, in that the poems of middle life are placed in that collection with those of early manhood, instead of with those of later life. This seems an error of judgment; the poems written during the too brief maturity of Coleridge's powers certainly claim a place by themselves, for although the note of inspiration is occasionally audible down to the last, scarcely anything in verse of the very first rank was produced at any other period.*

I. Juvenile Poems, including all the verse written by Coleridge down to his settlement at Nether Stowey in the early part of 1797.

To speak of the youthful period of Coleridge's poetical productions as one of *growth* is, doubtless, in a sense, a misnomer. Some of the relics of his schoolboy-muse may be truly considered as foreshadowing the poet of "The Ancient Mariner;" but thence, almost to the date of that masterpiece, there is a nearly complete absence of the higher poetry. From Coleridge's nineteenth to his twenty-fourth year, or thereabouts, he seems to have passed through a phase of morbid sentimentality, which robs his verse in the main of all force, fire, and imaginative vigour. Mr. Swinburne, doubtless, is indulging somewhat his favourite tendency towards hyperbole when he speaks of "being undesirous to trouble myself or any possible reader with the question whether 'Religious Musings' be more damnable than 'Lines to a Young Ass,' or less damnable;" but there is truth in his remark about the feebleness and flatulence of all the poems of this period. Certainly hardly anyone would have predicted from them the advent of a great poet.

* It is fair, however, to remark that the reason which prompted this arrangement was probably the difficulty of assigning dates to many of the pieces among the *Sibylline Leaves*, published in 1817. That collection embraces poems dating from 1795, and perhaps earlier, down to the date of publication; and it was, therefore, most convenient to place the whole of it in one extensive and somewhat vague chronological division.

Of the schoolboy poems, the most beautiful is the earliest in date. This little piece, of only six lines, called "First Advent of Love," need not fear comparison, I think, with any poem written at the age of fifteen. As here we may find perhaps a prophecy of the perfect music and loving imagery of "Genevieve," so in "The Raven" and "Time, Real and Imaginary," the germ may be traced of that power of wild, fantastic creation which reached its highest embodiment in "The Ancient Mariner."

If we turn from these three early poems to the pieces which immediately follow, the contrast is a melancholy one. There are many pretty lines and stanzas, much graceful, often melancholy, sentiment, and some deep religious feeling; but of music, of imagination in the highest sense, hardly a trace. One noticeable feature is a great *penchant* for the personification of abstractions, even the most shadowy. Thus we have in the "Songs of the Pixies," "graceful Ease" and "meek-eyed Pity;" in "Lines on an Autumnal Evening," "chaste Joyance;" in "Lines to a Friend," "Frenzy, fierce-eyed child of moping pain," and so on. There is also a liberal indulgence in vile adjectives, like "beamy," "steamy," and "paly." I can hardly think that Mr. Traill is right in describing the "Songs of the Pixies" as worth far more as an earnest of future achievement than the very unequal "Monody on the Death of Chatterton." The first is certainly a graceful production, with a touch of genuine fancy about it, and some melody, but it certainly cannot be considered in any way remarkable, or at all prophetic of the future greatness of the poet who, five years later, was to produce "The Ancient Mariner." The little piece "Time, Real and Imaginary" (written many years earlier), is, as "an earnest of future achievement," worth a score of such pieces.

Nor can much be said in favour of the early sonnets, or

"effusions" as he preferred to call them. In the first one, addressed to William Lisle Bowles, and thanking him for his "soft strains," we get the key to the influence under which they were written. The strong attraction which the verses of Bowles exerted on the mind of Coleridge, when in its most susceptible stage, must always remain something of a mystery; but amid the chilly artificialities which marked the poetry of the day, it is easy to see that even such a partial return to nature as we can observe in the reverend poet might prove powerfully attractive to a young and ardent poetical nature. Doubtless the "soft strains" of Bowles are responsible for a good deal of the rather overdone sentimentality, of which Coleridge never altogether rid himself. There is little that is remarkable in the "effusions," although occasionally a fine thought or expression breaks the monotony of commonplace—*e.g.*, in the well-known lines in the one on Burke :

Thee, stormy Pity, and the cherished lure
Of Pomp, and proud Precipitance of soul
Wilder'd with meteor fires.

The best, perhaps, as a whole, is the eighth, which begins :

As when far off the warbled strains are heard
That soar on morning's wing the vales among.

Coleridge in after years wrote a few other sonnets, some of them better than any of these, but he never attained to any mastery in that form. This is somewhat remarkable when we place by its side the fact that Hartley Coleridge, who certainly inherited much of his father's genius, had a special partiality for the sonnet, and wrote in that form not only the best of his poetical work, but also some of the most musical and most finely-sustained sonnets in the language.

Passing by some pieces of no great importance, we now come to the "Religious Musings," written, says its author, "on the Christmas Eve of 1794." It is interesting to com-

pare Mr. Swinburne's brief but trenchant criticism of this poem with the enthusiastic welcome which it received at the time from some of the young poet's admirers. Charles Lamb, then a youth of twenty-one, who himself contributed to the *Juvenile Poems* some sonnets and other pieces, writes to Coleridge some time during 1796: "I have read all your 'Religious Musings' with uninterrupted feelings of profound admiration; you may safely rest your fame on it." Again, the year following: "I was reading your 'Religious Musings' the other day, and sincerely I think it is the noblest poem in the language, next after the *Paradise Lost*, and even that was not made the vehicle of such grand truths." As an expression of deep religious feeling, of awe and heartfelt homage, in presence of what the devout young Unitarian regarded as the supreme realities of the universe, and of faith in the power which out of the present calamities of the world would bring forth enduring good, the "Religious Musings" is indeed remarkable; but as poetry, in the strict sense, it cannot take very high rank. It is in fact a series of remarks, often noble in sentiment and nobly expressed, but without either the artistic unity and completeness or the radiant charm of the genuine poem.

"The Destiny of Nations" (which remains in a fragmentary state) is much the same, both in form and motive, as the "Religious Musings," and like it was written in 1794. The blank verse of both poems bears, I think, much more affinity to that of Young or Akenside, and occasionally to Thomson (as in the "Hymn" which closes the *Seasons*), than to that of Milton, with which even Mr. Traill seems disposed to compare it. One passage is remarkable as showing the poet's sense of the value of sonorousness in place-names, where the effect of the Northern Lights in the long sunless winter of Lapland is compared to the power of Fancy in "first unsensualizing the dark mind;" though Lamb's

praise of it (in a letter to Coleridge), as comparable with "any in Milton for fulness of circumstance and lofty-pacedness of versification," seems altogether extravagant.

The next poem of importance is apparently (for the assignment of dates is often a difficult matter) "Lewti; or the Circassian Love Chaunt," written in 1795.* This graceful and melodious piece is an immense advance on the two blank-verse compositions just mentioned; though Mr. Swinburne is hardly justified in the assertion that "nothing of more precious and rare sweetness exists in verse than that stanza of the swans disturbed."

In this year (1795) Coleridge married Sara Fricker, of Bristol, and, during the honeymoon at Clevedon, he wrote several pieces, chiefly in blank verse, the finest being "The Æolian Harp." Mr. Traill is certainly unjust to this poem when he says it "has no more than the moderate merits, with its full share of the characteristic faults, of his earlier productions." Perhaps it may be that he is entirely out of sympathy with the sentiment of the piece, but it is nevertheless surprising that he does not feel the poetical charm of such lines as these on the music of the breeze-swept harp:

Such a soft floating witchery of sound
As twilight elfins make, when they at eve
Voyage on gentle gales from fairyland,
Where Melodies round honey-dropping flowers,
Footless and wild, like birds of Paradise,
Nor pause, nor perch, hovering on untamed wing!

Far from faultless this piece doubtless is, but comparing it, for instance, with the "Religious Musings"—of which Mr. Traill has rather an excessive admiration—we may say that it is a poem, while the other, properly speaking, is not one.

* Mr. Traill is clearly in error in enumerating this among the poems written in 1797-8. In the *Sibylline Leaves* of 1817 it is given as from the *Morning Post*, 1795; and this is the date assigned in all the editions of Coleridge which I have seen. This is not the only instance in which Mr. Traill is apparently incorrect in the matter of dates.

Passing by the lines addressed to Charles Lloyd, on his proposing to domesticate with the author—lines chiefly remarkable for their felicitous touches of landscape beauty—we come to the most remarkable of the poems which had their origin in Coleridge's early political enthusiasm. These are "Fire, Famine, and Slaughter," and the two odes, "To the Departing Year" and "France." The war eclogue is full of poetic fire, and is the expression of the young poet's detestation for the policy of Pitt, to which he attributes the intestine wars of France and the disasters of Ireland. Doubtless—though on the head of the minister himself curses the most awful are imprecated—"letters four do form his name"—it was the man's policy, not the man himself, that he wished to hold up to aversion. The ode "To the Departing Year" was written in the last days of 1796, the "France" in February, 1797; but in that short interval Coleridge's political attitude appears to have undergone a considerable change. In the former—which breathes hatred and vengeance against the crowned heads who had conspired against France, and prophesies the ruin of this country for its inertness and indifference to the sacred cause of freedom on the Continent—the poet can only sustain himself by his unswerving faith in divine things.

I unpartaking of the evil thing,

Have wailed my country with a loud lament.

Now I recentre my immortal mind,

In the deep Sabbath of meek self-content.

Of that enthusiastic confidence in the French Republic which had hitherto inspired Coleridge, and of which the earlier ode is still, in part at least, the outcome, "France" may be considered as the recantation, or palinode. It seems to have been the war which the Directory had declared against the republic of Switzerland, which alienated once and for all the sympathies of Coleridge.

As to the technical qualities of these odes, I will say nothing, but rather quote, with respectful approval, the fine words of Professor Wilson, in his *Essay on Coleridge's Poetical Works* :

The genius of Coleridge was too original transcendently to excel in poetry, of which the model had been set, the mould cast, by the great poets of old—and which had been cultivated with high success by some gifted spirits of our own time. In his odes, his genius is engaged in imitation. It works in a fine spirit, but in trammels ; his Pegasus is in training, and he takes his gallop in grand style ; but Imagination hears afar off in the dust the hoofs of the desert-born.

It will be seen that, in the period of Coleridge's poetical productiveness which we have been considering, there is little in the nature of a development of power—at least of a development leading up to the wonderful burst of music and imaginative splendour which was now immediately to follow. We have in these youthful poems many fine expressions of the young poet's moral, emotional, and intellectual nature—of his religious fervour, of his enthusiasm for liberty, of the depth and sincerity of his domestic affections ; but they are only in rare and brief instances instinct with the nameless charm of poetry. In "*Lewti*" we may catch some preluding strains to the music of "*Christabel*," and in one at least of the schoolboy poems there is a really remarkable imaginative vigour, while in the odes there are many noble and sonorous passages ; but, on the whole, there was little from which to infer the possession of a poetical gift so rare and priceless as that of Coleridge was now to prove itself to be.

II. *Poems of Early Manhood.* This embraces the period that intervened between the beginning of Coleridge's residence at Nether Stowey in 1797 and his removal to Keswick in 1800. Within this space of little more than three years Coleridge not only founded his poetic fame, but well-nigh exhausted (or so it seems) the fount of inspiration. The list of poems written in these years comprises : the drama of

Osorio (afterwards remodelled for the stage and rechristened *Remorse*), 1797; "The Ancient Mariner," 1797; the first part of "Christabel," 1797; "Kubla Khan," 1797; "Frost at Midnight," 1798; "The Nightingale," 1798; "Fears in Solitude," 1798; the fragment of the "Ballad of the Dark Ladie," with the piece called "Genevieve," or "Love," (apparently) 1799; the "Devil's Thoughts," 1799; the translation of Schiller's *Wallenstein*, 1799-1800; "Christabel," part ii., 1800. The second part of "Christabel" was written at Keswick, but apparently only a month or two after his arrival there; so that the crowning period of Coleridge's poetical activity may fairly enough be considered as brought to a close with his settlement in the Lake Country.

It was very early in 1797, that Coleridge, in company with his wife and family and Charles Lloyd, went to live at Nether Stowey, a village at the foot of the Quantock Hills, in Somersetshire. Very shortly began that acquaintance and friendship with Wordsworth which was to prove of such importance and value to both these great men, but especially to Coleridge. The two poets first met in June of this year, at Racedown, in Dorsetshire, where Wordsworth was at that time residing with his sister; but so strong proved the fascination of Coleridge's society, that the Wordsworths, within a few weeks of their first acquaintance with him, left Racedown, and removed to Alfoxden, near Nether Stowey. Both poets were at the time engaged in writing tragedies, and very probably the strong encouragement of Wordsworth flattered Coleridge's ambitious hopes, and urged on his lagging zeal. However, neither the *Borderers* nor *Osorio* (in its present form) was destined to see the footlights. The former was summarily rejected, and when the manuscript of the latter was sent to Sheridan, he did not even acknowledge the receipt of the letter accompanying the play. "Hereby hangs a tale," which, though pretty well known, may be repeated

here. Sheridan, informing a friend that he had received a play from Coleridge, observed that there was one extraordinary line in the Cave Scene (opening of the fourth act) :

Drip ! drip ! drip ! drip !

"In short," he said, "there's nothing here but dripping." In the published drama the lines which moved Sheridan's mirth, of course, disappear ; and Coleridge appears to have been desirous (see original preface to *Remorse*) to ignore their existence. Thus, treated with despite, *Osorio* was neither acted nor published ; and it was not till 1813 that the play—curtailed and recast, with the names of the most of the personages altered, and re-named *Remorse*—was, chiefly by the interest and encouragement of Lord Byron, produced on the stage of Drury Lane Theatre. Two fragments of much beauty, taken from *Osorio*, the Dungeon Scene and the Foster Mother's Tale, were published with the *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798.

A more important result, however, was to follow from Coleridge's friendship and intercourse with Wordsworth. "The Ancient Mariner" was written within a few months of their first acquaintance, having been planned and in part composed during a walk between Nether Stowey and Lynton, in North Devon, which Coleridge took with Wordsworth and his sister in the autumn of 1797. It was originally intended to be a joint-production, and was designed to pay the expenses of this little tour ; on which account Mr. Traill, with perhaps more force than elegance, calls it "the most sublime of 'pot-boilers' to be found in all literature." Wordsworth contributed a line here and there, and also (from a recent reading of Shelvocke's *Voyages*) furnished the idea of the albatross, and the avenging of its death by the polar spirit. He suggested likewise the reanimation of the dead bodies to work the ship. But they soon discovered that their respective manners were incompatible, and Wordsworth

decided on that account to separate from an undertaking to which, he says, he could only have been a clog. As the poem extended beyond the original scheme, a volume was proposed, to which they were to contribute independent poems, so that the genius of each might find its natural expression. Those of Coleridge were to be on supernatural and romantic subjects; those of Wordsworth on subjects drawn from ordinary life; as Coleridge has himself recorded in a passage of great beauty and interest in the fourteenth chapter of his *Biographia Literaria*. Thus originated the *Lyrical Ballads*, which appeared in the following autumn; but though it was at first intended to consist chiefly of poems on supernatural subjects, and therefore to be mainly the work of Coleridge, in the result the contributions of the latter were very much fewer than those of Wordsworth, the actual number of poems by each being nineteen by Wordsworth and four by Coleridge. Those of the latter, besides "The Ancient Mariner," were "The Nightingale" and two scenes from the unpublished *Osorio*.

To discuss "The Ancient Mariner" in any thorough manner would take a separate essay, and I can only note down a few points which have occurred to me in the study of this wonderful poem:

1. As to form. This was doubtless derived from the old English ballads, of which Coleridge was very fond (he speaks, *e.g.*, with admiration in the "Dejection" of *Sir Patrick Spens*). One noticeable feature is the striking effect produced by the repetition of lines, phrases, and words. The way in which a phrase or short expression is taken up and repeated (perhaps with some modification) a little further on, may be compared perhaps to the reappearance of musical phrases in a symphony. Take for example the following:

There passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye.

A weary time ! a weary time !
How glazed each weary eye.

In the six-lined stanzas, the fourth line is often repeated as the sixth—a metrical device which Edgar Poe has also employed with great effect. There is everywhere apparent in this poem a marvellously fine ear for sound, and a consummate art for giving effect to it—and this is shown nowhere more than in the use of alliteration. This stanza, *e.g.*:

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free;
We were the first that ever burst,
Into that silent sea—

together with the one that follows, form quite a study in alliterative effect. The archaic forms which occur here and there were doubtless employed by Coleridge for the sake of harmony with the old-ballad form which he had chosen. We have, *e.g.*, *swound*, *countrie*, *wist*, and the Spenserian *eftsoons* and *ivy-tod*. The word *mariner*, by the way, though so spelt in the usual edition of the poem, was clearly intended by Coleridge (at least at the end of a line) to be written and pronounced *marinere*.

2. The wonderful vividness of the narrative must impress every reader. It has all the verisimilitude of an actual experience or drama of real life, and, at the same time, all the beauty of a work of art. Wordsworth told the Rev. Alexander Dyce that “‘The Ancient Mariner’ was founded on a strange dream, which a friend of Coleridge had, who fancied he saw a skeleton ship, with figures in it.” Now, considering the curious unreliability of Coleridge’s memory as to the sources whence he drew, and likewise the fact that “Kubla Khan” was certainly the result of a dream, it seems a not altogether improbable conjecture that the dreamer of this strange dream was Coleridge himself. The story is told in so lifelike a way as to suggest that its author had absolutely seen what he describes, though it may have been only

with the eye of his imagination. Certainly the poet achieved no small success in carrying out his scheme of poetry on supernatural and romantic subjects, to which he proposed (to use his own words in the *Biographia Literaria*) "to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith." It seems, by the way, not altogether certain, that at the time "The Ancient Mariner" was written, Coleridge had ever been on ship-board. At least, he afterwards altered (and completely spoiled in the altering) the line "The furrow followed free," on the ground that this describes the effect as seen by a spectator from the shore, and not from the ship itself. The alteration has happily not been preserved by most of his editors. Not only is the narrative vivid and realistic as a whole, but there are frequent lines and short passages which have all the force of pictures. Take, *e.g.*, the stanza describing the arrival of the bride :

The bride hath passed into the hall,
Red as a rose is she ;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

Or the stanza, a little further on, which gives a very different picture—that of the snowy cliffs in the region of the southern pole, seen through mist and drifting ice. One simile, drawn from the pictorial art, is, perhaps, one of the most striking in all poetry. The ship when becalmed in an unknown sea is said to be

As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

How lifelike, too (as if it described the experience of an eye-witness), the two lines which describe the sudden downfall of the tropical night !

The sun's rim dips ; the stars rush out ;
At one stride comes the dark.

The force and appropriateness of single epithets likewise, such as "glittering eye," "star-dogged moon," "sleeping woods," deserve to be noticed. One criterion of a true poem, according to Matthew Arnold, is the "inevitableness" of the language. It is not too much to say that in "The Ancient Mariner" every phrase, every word, tells, and a word could hardly be altered anywhere without injury to the poetry.

3. The way in which Coleridge has managed to increase the effect of the poem by the force of contrasts deserves special mention. Horrible, and even ghastly, as is much of the imagery, there is yet nothing which can properly be called loathsome or disgusting. It was on this account, probably, that Coleridge excised a stanza (the twelfth of the third part) descriptive of the Death-Mate of Life-in-Death. With all deference to the great authority of Lessing, one might venture to doubt whether the loathsome or repulsive (*das Ekelhaft*) has any place in poetic art, even, as he puts it, for the purpose of producing and strengthening the mixed feelings of the ludicrous and the terrible (*Laocoon* xxv.). Perhaps, even in Dante (to quote an instance brought forward by Lessing), the repulsive features are tolerated only because they are found in close connection with passages of poetic beauty.* But what is especially remarkable is the way in which Coleridge has managed to heighten the effect of the horrors of the story, and at the same time to relax the painful tension of the minds of his readers, by bringing into juxtaposition with them images of peaceful loveliness.

* Cf. Sime, *Lessing*, Vol. I., pp. 287-9, for an interesting criticism of Lessing's position as to the place in poetry of the ugly and the disgusting. It may be worth mention here that Mr. Browning, in his "Childe Roland," goes dangerously near overstepping the limits imposed by the artistic sense; though, it seems to me, he just manages to escape being offensive. Much of the imagery of that wonderful poem might have been suggested by some grimy landscape in the manufacturing districts.

I would especially call attention to the closing stanzas of part iv., beginning with the line

The moving moon went up the sky,

and to the exquisite beauty of the prose comment on the first of these stanzas. Another passage, almost equally lovely, describes the music of the angelic spirits which have passed into the dead bodies:

It ceased ; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

That image of the hidden brook, creeping with soft music through the summer woods, introduced into far other scenes—a doomed ship worked by a goblin crew in a sultry tropical sea—is one of the loveliest examples of the effect of contrast that any poet has ever devised.

4. Of the moral of this piece, we may say that while exhibited in the most striking manner, it in no way detracts from the excellence of the poem as a work of art. Nor is it one which in our own day, when, under the guidance of our scientific teachers, we seem in danger of losing our sympathy with animals and with the weaker part of creation generally, we can afford to disregard. Rather let us give heed to the words in which the Ancient Mariner bids adieu to the Wedding Guest :

He prayeth well who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.
He prayeth best who loveth best
All things, both great and small ;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.

Of "Christabel" I shall not say much. For how can one venture to speak about a poem on which so many fine things have been said, and which every lover of poetry has

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well-nigh by heart! As the attentive reader must have observed, one of its greatest charms is the versification, the idea of which was doubtless borrowed from the old metrical romances, as that of "The Ancient Mariner" from the old ballads. By securing the greatest amount of variety consistent with the preservation of rhythmical unity, Coleridge has here produced a musical effect which is at once harmonious and full of melody. Leigh Hunt, a critic whom it is now-a-days somewhat the fashion (most unjustly, I think) to hold in slight esteem, has some remarks on this point in the Essay prefixed to his anthology, *Imagination and Fancy*. He says:

Coleridge saw the mistake which had been made in regard to this measure (the octosyllabic), and restored it to the beautiful freedom of which it was capable, by calling to mind the liberties allowed its old musical professors, the minstrels, and dividing it by *time* instead of *syllables*; by the *beat of four*, into which you might get as many syllables as you could, instead of allotting eight syllables to the poor time, whatever it might have to say. He varied it further with alternate rhymes and stanzas, with rests and omissions precisely analogous to those in music. . . . He even ventures, with an exquisite sense of solemn strangeness and licence (for there is witchcraft going forward), to introduce a couplet of blank verse, itself as mystically and beautifully modulated as anything in the music of Gluck or Weber.

In this couplet, referred to by Hunt, it would perhaps require a musical ear to detect the correct fall of the accent:

Is the night chilly and dark?

The night is chilly but not dark.

In fact, the number of syllables in a line varies from seven to eleven or twelve, and in the last line but one of the first part there are as many as fourteen—the line in question consisting of four anapaests followed by two short syllables.

The impression made by this poem is one of perfect beauty, not of weird power and sublimity, with occasional glimpses of beauty, as in "The Ancient Mariner." Perhaps on this account the latter poem usually produces a greater effect on a reader of no great poetic sensibility. Even the witch Geraldine is beautiful:

I guess, 'twas frightful there to see
A lady so richly clad as she —
Beautiful exceedingly !

And such is the poet's sympathy and the transforming power of imagination that the witch's hiss, her whispered spells, and the glance of her serpent-eyes, which fascinate poor Christabel to a passive imitation, do not at all interfere with the exquisite beauty of the whole, while they bring into greater relief the lovely purity and innocence of Christabel.

The language of this poem is so exceedingly simple, there is so little pretentiousness of any kind about it, that some on that account might overlook its singular beauty. In the passage, for instance, where Christabel and Geraldine pass through the castle-gate and cross the court-yard, there is hardly a single expression which does not seem perfectly obvious, and might not apparently have occurred to anyone. In these twenty-two lines there is not one word which seems exclusively the property of the poet—yet that their effect is in a very high degree poetical admits of no doubt whatever. A little further on Christabel's chamber is described in words which are a miracle of loveliness and compressed picturesque expression. One can hardly think of any chambers in English poetry equal to this, save that of Madeline in the "Eve of Saint Agnes," and perhaps the moonlit tapestried room in Matthew Arnold's "Tristram and Iseult," "where those lifeless lovers be."

Christabel is a fragment, the loveliest fragment in English poetry—and so it must remain, like that exquisite Venus of the Louvre, who draws to herself the homage of the whole world. Coleridge averred that he could complete it whenever he chose so to apply himself, but perhaps even he could not have done so, at least in a manner worthy of the original inspiration. Even the second part, written at Keswick in

1800—three years after the first—shows some decline, both in melody and imagination, though it has perhaps even more force and fire; and what so great a poet left unfinished, let no lesser man profanely lay hands on. So, however, did not think that great-little man, Mr. Martin Farquhar Tupper; and I should think his continuation—"Geraldine"—may fairly rank as the most astonishing piece of impertinence that a presumptuous poetaster was ever guilty of.

To 1797 belongs also the curiously beautiful fragment of a dream-poem, called "Kubla Khan." One can hardly read without impatience of the unfortunate "person on business from Porlock," who put a sudden stop to the transcription of this marvellous word-music, music not to be recalled after the first vivid impression had passed away. The most singular thing, however, about these lines is that they were composed (with some hundreds more) in a sleep produced by the effect of an anodyne. Is it possible that Coleridge had already begun the use of opium, and that his statement that he first took it at Keswick in the form of the "Kendal Black Drop" was an illusion? Certain it is, as Mr. Traill remarks, that "Kubla Khan" is very like a metrical version of one of De Quincey's opium dreams. As to the poetical value of this piece, there is, as between Mr. Swinburne and Mr. Traill, the most extraordinary disparity of opinion. To the latter "it is hardly more than a psychological curiosity, and only that, perhaps, in respect of the completeness of its metrical form." Mr. Swinburne holds, on the other hand, that "it is, perhaps, the most wonderful of all poems. In reading it we seem rapt into that paradise revealed to Swedenborg, where music and colour and perfume were one, where you could hear the hues and see the harmonies of heaven. For absolute melody and splendour it were hardly rash to call it the first poem in the language." Neither judgment is, to my humble thinking, a sound one; that of Mr. Traill's shows consider-

able lack of the artistic sense, while Mr. Swinburne's is a characteristic example of his love of extravagance and weakness for superlatives. However, as a specimen of the way in which sound may be brought to the aid of sense—of the use of alliteration and the musical arrangement of vowel-sounds—"Kubla Khan" has few, if any, rivals in our literature.

Of the poems written in 1798 I can only refer to the "Fears in Solitude," "Frost at Midnight," and "The Nightingale: a Conversation Poem." These are all in blank verse, and the two latter are noteworthy and beautiful examples of his skill in that form. The lovely lines in "Frost at Midnight," in which the father promises to the infant Hartley a boyhood spent amid the soothing and inspiring influences of nature—mountains, and lakes, and sea-shores—may in the fine pathos, which in the light of that boy's after-career we seem to read into them, take rank with Wordsworth's exquisite lines "To H. C., six years old."

In the September of 1798 Coleridge left England, to study the language, literature, and philosophy of Germany in its native home; and he did not return to this country till the summer or autumn of the following year. It seems very difficult to fix with certainty the poems belonging to 1798 and 1799 which were composed during his residence abroad. Two unquestionably—the blank-verse lines "Written at Elbingerode, in the Hartz," and "The Day Dream," were produced in Germany. There is a delicate grace, as well as much warmth of affection, about the latter piece; and the blank verse of the former has some fine qualities, but neither poems are of first-rate importance. The fragment of "The Ballad of the Dark Ladie" was apparently written, partly at any rate, in 1799—though whether abroad, or after Coleridge's return to England, it seems impossible to say.

The introduction to this metrical tale contained the lines—afterwards separated and printed as a distinct poem—which are now known by the name “Love,” though originally “Genevieve” appears to have been an alternative title. Of this exquisite piece Mr. Traill says, that “beautiful as the verses are, one cannot but feel that they only escape the ‘namby-pamby’ by the breadth of a hair.” A man (it seems to me) who finds anything approaching the “namby-pamby” in “Genevieve” would be likely to discover insipidity in “Comus” and “Il Penseroso,” and (who knows?) perhaps immorality in “The Eve of St. Agnes.” It is refreshing, after this, to read the following sentences of Leigh Hunt: “I can hardly say a word upon this poem for very admiration. I must observe, however, that one of the charms of it consists in the numerous repetitions and revolvings of the words, one on the other, as if taking delight in their own beauty.”

After Coleridge's return from Germany, he wrote those not very successful satirical verses, called “The Devil's Thoughts”—some of the best stanzas, however, being contributed by Southey. When the lines appeared in the *Morning Post*, they created quite a *furor*, and necessitated the printing of some hundred extra copies of the number of the paper in which they appeared. In the winter of 1799-1800, Coleridge, then settled in London, produced, in the short space of six weeks, that translation of Schiller's *Wallenstein*, which all critics have extolled, and which some (like Mr. Traill) have pronounced “his most perfect dramatic poem.” As Coleridge had now composed his chief contributions to dramatic literature—only the adaptation and rechristening of *Osorio* and the comparatively unimportant *Zapolya* being the work of later years—it may be well to say something here of his dramatic gift.

Mr. Swinburne considers that “Coleridge was inapt for

dramatic poetry," and goes on to speak slightly of the *Remorse*. Now, that there are serious defects in this and the other plays cannot be doubted, but in Coleridge's case it was rather the excess, the superfluity of power, than the want of it, which prevented his complete success as a dramatist. The development of the dramatic gift, which he certainly possessed, was clogged and impeded by his other endowments. Two faults the *Remorse* certainly has—first, the characters (especially Ordonio) are too much given to philosophizing, and treat their part in the development of the action too much after the fashion of a metaphysical problem which has to be worked out; and, secondly, fine speeches and fragments of exquisite poetry are often inappropriately put into their mouths. There are perhaps more beautiful passages in the *Remorse* which could be separated from the text and treated as independent poems than in any other English play. But still, even as a play, the *Remorse* has great merits—there is considerable life and movement in the action, the development of the plot is not badly managed, there is plenty of spirited dialogue, the blank verse is almost everywhere sonorous, and one character at any rate (that of Alhadra) is finely conceived and drawn. Beside the disparaging judgment of Mr. Swinburne, let me place that of Lord Byron, who says, in a letter to Coleridge (March 13th, 1815), "We have had nothing to be mentioned in the same breath with *Remorse* for very many years." Also Shelley's reference to it, in a letter to Peacock, as being the only modern acted play which he considered superior as a composition to his *Cenci*. Some of the most remarkable passages in this play are the scene of the Incantation in the third act, the Dungeon Scene in the beginning of the fifth act, which, unlike the "Foster-Mother's Tale," was restored in the acted play; and Alhadra's description (act iv., scene 3) of her husband Isidore's murder and appeal to his

Moresco followers to avenge his death. The latter scene is particularly striking, and any dramatist that ever lived might have been proud to claim it as his own.

More beautiful as poetry than Alhadra's fierce invective is the Incantation scene. In this scene occurs what is, perhaps, in a poetical sense, the gem of the whole play—the Song or Miserere which, immediately after the invocation to the soul of Alvar, is heard (according to the stage direction) behind the scenes, to the accompaniment of an instrument of glass or steel. Not unjustly does Christopher North call it "Shakspearean," and declare that it "may be chaunted, without losing any of its holy charm, after the dirge sung by the spirit of air in Prospero's enchanted island."

Hear, sweet spirit, hear the spell,
Lest a blacker charm compel !
So shall the midnight breezes swell
With thy deep long-lingering knell.

And at evening evermore,
In a chapel on the shore,
Shall the chaunter, sad and saintly,
Yellow tapers burning faintly,
Doleful masses chaunt for thee,
Miserere Domine !

Hark ! the cadence dies away
On the quiet moonlight sea :
The boatmen rest their oars and say,
Miserere Domine !

Osorio, as has been said, was considerably altered in detail by Coleridge before being put upon the stage in 1813 under its new name. Several long passages were excised, there were many minor curtailments and some small additions, a scene or two was transposed, and the names of the *dramatis personæ* were nearly all changed, with great advantage to the sonority of sound. That, on the whole, the remodelled play is vastly superior to the first draft of *Osorio* cannot be doubted, nor have the passages of the long-lost and lately

recovered original (published in 1873, with a monograph by the author of "Tennysonianism"), for the most part, that great poetical value which the writer of that monograph claims for them. There seems, in fact, to be little of great importance which appeared in the original draft and was excised from the stage play, with the exception of the "Foster-Mother's Tale," which is included in all editions of the poems of Coleridge.

Wallenstein (which includes the two more important plays of Schiller's trilogy, if one may so call it, viz., the *Piccolomini* and the *Death of Wallenstein*, but omits the prelude, *Wallenstein's Camp*) has taken its place as perhaps the best verse-translation in the English language. Barring some slight inaccuracies, resulting from a want of perfect familiarity with German, it is unquestionably a masterly work, and it has perhaps more poetical beauty than Schiller's original drama. As an example of this, I would refer to the scene in the second act of the *Piccolomini*, where the Princess Thekla describes to the Countess Tertsy and her lover, Max Piccolomini, her visit to the astrological tower, and to the beautiful lines on the Pagan Divinities which immediately follow.

Mr. Swinburne prefers *Zapolya* to the *Remorse*, on the ground that, while it is without the purple patches of the latter play, "there is more of air and motion." The story is a romantic one—the usurpation of the throne of Illyria by the late King's brother, Emerick, and the banishment of the Queen, Zapolya, who, with her infant son, disguised and brought up as a young mountaineer, takes refuge in a wild and unfrequented hill region. At length, however, by the triumph of the Queen's party and the death of the usurper, they recover their rights, and the young prince Andreas, now King of Illyria, weds Glycine, the orphan daughter of one of the late King's most faithful adherents. There are here all the materials for a stirring play; but somehow the drama

fails, by an apparent want of spirit and life, to maintain the interest of the reader. It was not intended for the stage, where it must certainly have failed, though the wild scenery and incidents and the costumes of the mountaineers would have produced many strikingly-picturesque effects. The play consists of two parts—a prelude of one act, and a sequel of four; and it would be interesting to know why Coleridge should have thought (see the advertisement to the play) that by so distributing his five acts, he made some approximation to the plan of the Greek trilogy.

One general remark deserves to be made about these dramas; that is, the great number of double-endings to the lines, and the frequent admission of extra unaccented syllables. The latter exemplifies Coleridge's tendency (as manifested in "Christabel") to count a line by beats instead of syllables. The frequency of double-endings is especially noticeable in the *Remorse*, one striking instance being contained in a rejected passage of that play, printed in a note at the end, which describes Alvar's residence in Venice and intercourse with Titian.

Any one who considers carefully the productions of this too brief period of Coleridge's poetic maturity will observe that the greater portion of his most valuable work was produced in one year, 1797. This includes "The Ancient Mariner," "Christabel" (part i.), "Kubla Khan," and the original draft of *Remorse*, possibly, also, in part in least, as one might conjecture from the reference in the *Biographia Literaria*, the ballad of the "Dark Ladie." This year deserves then to be called *par excellence*, Coleridge's *annus mirabilis*. His genius, which suddenly shooting forth, produced such a bright and consummate flower, almost immediately began to decay, and he wrote little verse at any other time which can be considered altogether equal to any of the poems of this one year.

III. Poems of Middle and Later Life. In 1800, Coleridge removed to Keswick, and, whether or no he had already indulged in the use of opium, in the course of two or three years from his first settlement in the Lake Country it became habitual with him. In the first ten years of this century—taking into account some considerable absences, one in Malta and Italy of nearly two years—Coleridge continued to reside mainly at the Lakes, though latterly he left Keswick (where he had been domiciled in Southey's house) and was received as Wordsworth's guest at Allan Bank, Grasmere.

It certainly appears singular that though Coleridge, for a considerable portion of ten years in the prime of life, lived in Cumberland and Westmorland, amid the loveliest mountain and lake scenery in England, its influence should be so slightly traceable in his poetry. Even the names of lakes and mountain-heights very rarely occur. It is curious, by the way, that though the scene of "Christabel" (as is clear from the second part) is laid in the Lake Country, there is not a single place-name in the first part. It almost looks as if it was after taking up his residence there that Coleridge determined to lay there the scene of his poem. Certainly, by no fair use of language, can Coleridge be said to have belonged to the so-called *Lake School*. It was the accident of Wordsworth's connection with the region of the lakes that drew thither Coleridge, and eventually Southey, but both the genius and the theories of the three poets were widely different from each other, and, as De Quincey says, "Wordsworth and Southey never had one principle in common." The truth seems to have been, as regards Coleridge's apparently small indebtedness to the scenery of the lakes, that his genius was formed and developed amid other scenes. It was "seaward Quantock's heathy hills," and not the sublimer heights of Skiddaw and Saddleback, which had engaged his affections most deeply, and had impressed their fair forms

most vividly on his young imagination. Perhaps, too, now that his health and spirits began to fail, and the terrible bondage of opium became ever more galling, he fled from those natural beauties which were associated in his mind with happier years. De Quincey, in his *Autobiographic Sketches*, has an extremely beautiful passage in which this thought is developed. It is also by no means unlikely that he found the climate of the Lake Country injurious to his health.

The interest of the whole of this closing period lies rather for the student of Coleridge's literary criticism and of his spiritual philosophy than of his poetry. *Remorse*, as has been already mentioned, was put on the stage of Drury Lane Theatre in 1813. "Christabel" was published in 1816 for the first time, together with "Kubla Khan" and "The Pains of Sleep," and in 1817 appeared Coleridge's last dramatic attempt, *Zapolya*. The same year witnessed also the publication of the *Sibylline Leaves*, a collection of poems of various dates, "so called" (says the preface) "in allusion to the fragmentary and widely-scattered state in which they have been long suffered to remain." The quotation from Virgil's *Catalecta* which this preface contains may be regarded in a sense as Coleridge's farewell to the muse. A few only of the poems of this period of decline must be briefly referred to. Though on many, perhaps on most, the stamp of genius is unmistakeable, yet on the whole they are rather fragments than complete and perfect poems—crumbs, one might call them, from an Olympian banquet. Vast schemes were ever present to the mind of Coleridge, few of which were destined to be realized. Masterpieces of literary and theological criticism were planned, and partly executed, of which only the fragments—the *disjecta membra*—remain, besides the great work to which all the rest was subsidiary, and which was to reconcile for ever the conflicting claims of the intellect and the Christian religion. Vast schemes he cherished,

too, of immortal poems—of an epic on the Destruction of Jerusalem by Titus (which he held to be the only subject remaining for an epic poem), and of Hymns on the Elements, of which the existing "Hymn to the Earth" is probably a fragmentary specimen.

That most pathetic piece called "Dejection: an Ode," was written in April, 1802. The subdued sunset colours with which the poem opens seem to give the key to that mood of sadness which is maintained throughout. Apart from its great poetic beauty, this ode has much interest and importance as an autobiographical record. It is especially valuable as showing the poet's sense of the declining vigour of "his shaping spirit of imagination," though that there is much noble imaginative writing in this very ode few will deny.

The "Hymn before Sunrise in the Vale of Chamouni" and the "Ode to Tranquillity" both appeared in early numbers of the *Friend*, the "Chamouni" in the issue of October 26th, 1809. The latter is certainly a noble poem, though Professor Wilson greatly exaggerates when he says that "out of the Bible no diviner inspiration was ever worded than the hymn. We doubt if there be any single strain equal to it in Milton or Wordsworth." Perhaps his estimate was coloured by the recollection of having (as he says) "heard this hymn from Coleridge's own lips, by sunrise among the coves of Helvellyn," for few of those, I believe, who heard poetry recited by that voice of most exquisite sweetness and modulation ever lost that unique impression. It would be interesting to learn whether Coleridge had actually visited Switzerland and seen Mont Blanc before writing this hymn, but the chances are against it. He returned from Malta in the autumn of 1805, *via* Naples and Rome, but instead of crossing the Alps on his way homeward he took ship at Leghorn for England. Some verses by Frederica Brunn

offered, at any rate, the immediate suggestion of the poem, and perhaps Coleridge's indebtedness to them was greater than Mr. H. N. Coleridge (in the preface to his uncle's "Table Talk") seems disposed to acknowledge. It is strange, by the way, that Mr. J. A. Symonds should call Shelley's verses, named "Mont Blanc," "somewhat Coleridgian." There is no similarity between the two poems (not even one of metre), save that both are on the same subject. Each is in some sort an address to that Being or that Power of which the great snow-mountain is a noble manifestation, but how differently is that Power conceived and regarded by each! Mr. Swinburne's talk about detecting a "rancid unction of piety" in this and other poems of Coleridge is most unjust. Of the absolute sincerity of his belief and his awe-struck sense of eternal things there cannot be the least doubt in any fair mind.

Many of the pieces written at this period it is quite impossible to classify in order of dates. "The Pains of Sleep" (written in 1803) has a sad autobiographical interest, especially in the light of his own subsequent confession. The beautiful verses called "A Day Dream" (not to be confounded with a poem of the same name already mentioned) contain some charming imaginative pictures, and are exquisitely melodious throughout. There are several poems in the ballad form, especially "Alice du Clos," and the fragment called "The Three Graves," both worthy of study. Another fragmentary piece is "The Blossoming of the Solitary Date Tree"—a lamentation, or so it seems, for unrequited affection. "Fancy in Nubibus" may be regarded as Coleridge's finest sonnet, though fashioned after the loose Shakspearean model. Nor should we pass by the graceful Italian pictures in the *Garden of Boccaccio*.

Of the poems of declining life the most famous is certainly the piece called "Youth and Age." Though each of its three

stanzas was written at a different period (the first probably in 1824, the last in 1827, and the second many years before), the several parts form a completely-harmonious whole. Had Coleridge left behind him nothing in verse but this perfect little piece, it should have preserved his fame as a poet. The "Improvisatore" is devoted to a charming exposition (partly in prose, partly in verse) of the passion of love. The piece called "Love, Hope, and Patience in Education" is both exquisite in itself and full of instruction to the teacher of children :

When overtaxed at length
Both Love and Hope beneath the load give way;
Then with a statue's smile, a statue's strength,
Stands the mute sister, Patience, nothing loth,
And, both supporting, does the work of both.

Even more beautiful, and perhaps less known, is "Love's Apparition and Evanishment : an Allegoric Romance."

Youth, Love, and Hope—these abstractions were clothed, to Coleridge's mind, in the fair forms and bright colours of imagination ; and so attired, they blended in the old man's thought with the contemplation of those unseen realities, the belief in which was a part of his very nature. Love was the first thought of Coleridge's awaking soul, as shown in the beautiful lines on her first advent, which are his earliest recorded verses. Love, too, seen as the unity in trinity of that graceful sisterhood, was the last. In the "Table Talk" (under date July 10, 1834—a fortnight before Coleridge's death), we find some lines which, though of course in prose, have all the rhythm of poetry, and may perhaps be regarded in a sense as the swan-song of the dying bard : "Is it not strange that very recently bygone images, and scenes of early life, have stolen into my mind, like breezes blown from the spice-islands of Youth and Hope—those twin realities of this phantom-world ! I do not add Love—for what is Love but Youth and Hope embracing, and so seen as *one* ?"

As a preliminary to the masterly criticism of Wordsworth's poetry, to which the latter part of the *Biographia Literaria* is mainly devoted, Coleridge discusses, in the fourteenth and fifteenth chapters of that work, the nature of poetry in general, and decides upon the following as his final definition of a poem: "A poem is that species of composition, which is opposed to works of science by proposing for its *immediate* object pleasure, not truth; and from all other species (having *this* object in common with it) it is discriminated by proposing to itself such delight from the *whole*, as is compatible with a distinct gratification from each component *part*." He then proceeds, from a consideration of Shakspeare's "Venus and Adonis," to lay down the following marks or characteristics of poetic genius in general: 1. Perfect sweetness of versification, and its adaptation to the subject. 2. The power of entering into, and portraying, by the aid of imagination, characters, scenes, and circumstances remote from the poet's own. 3. The use of natural imagery, not as a mere description or copying of nature, but as transformed by passion or emotion, or transfused with a human and intellectual life from the poet's own spirit. 4. Depth, and energy of thought. Of this last characteristic he speaks as in itself proving little, except as taken conjointly with the former; and then enlarges on the subject in a magnificent passage.

Now, if we turn from Coleridge's views on the nature of poetry to his own poems, and from these again to Mr. Traill's criticism of them, we shall find, I think, not only that the poet has on the whole admirably carried out his own ideas, but likewise that his conceptions of poetry have more validity than those of his latest critic. Mr. Traill says:

In spite of his theory as to the twofold function of poetry we must finally judge that of Coleridge, as of any other poet, by its relation to the actual. Ancient Mariners and Christabels—the people, the scenery, and the incidents of an imaginary world—may be handled by poetry once and again to the wonder and delight of man; but feats of this kind cannot—or cannot in the Western

world, at any rate—be repeated indefinitely, and the ultimate test of poetry, at least for the modern European reader, is its treatment of actualities—its relations to the world of human action, passion, sensation, thought. And when we try Coleridge's poetry in any one of these four regions of life, we seem forced to admit that, despite all its power and beauty, it at no moment succeeds in convincing us, as at their best moments Wordsworth's and even Byron's continually does, that the poet has found his true poetic vocation—that he is interpreting that aspect of life which he can interpret better than he can any other, and which no other poet, save the one who has vanquished all poets in their own special fields of achievement, can interpret as well as he.

And then he goes on to complain of "a tentativeness of manner which seems to come from a conscious aptitude for many poetic styles, and an incapacity to determine which should be definitely adopted and cultivated to perfection."

Now, in the first place, no one wants Ancient Mariners and Christabels to be repeated indefinitely. We already possess, from Coleridge's hand, perfect examples of that kind, and these, as Mr. Traill admits, have aroused in men both wonder and delight. A poet must be judged by what he has done, not by what he has failed to do; and there was a place in modern poetry for these exquisite creations—a place which no other poet has or could have exactly filled. Both forms of poetry—the idealistic and the realistic—are equally valid, because they equally answer to special needs of the human spirit. According to Mr. Traill, Shakspeare ought not to be judged by his fairy creations in the *Tempest* and the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, but by his imaginative grasp of human nature in its most various phases. It will hardly be denied, however, that the purely ideal side of his genius is of considerable account in an estimate of his greatness. At present, science, life, and actuality are the order of the day, and skilful portraiture, psychological subtlety, loftiness of moral teaching, are often accepted as actual substitutes for poetic beauty and charm. "Pleasure," says Coleridge in his lectures on Shakspeare, "is the magic circle out of which the poet must not dare to tread." Many

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modern poets, and some modern critics (Mr. Traill not altogether excepted), seem to be of a different opinion, and to treat the pleasure proper to poetry, if not altogether as unworthy of consideration, yet as a very subordinate matter. One fancies that Mr. Traill has accepted too submissively and too literally Matthew Arnold's misleading definition of poetry as "a criticism of life." Again, as for the tentativeness of manner, which Mr. Traill professes to discover in Coleridge's poetry, that seems a strange charge to bring against a poet who, at one bound, achieved in "Christabel" and "The Ancient Mariner" the height of artistic excellence. All that can be fairly considered matter of regret is that we have so little of this consummate work.

As to the general features of Coleridge's poetry, the following points may be noted :

1. Its melody of versification. The poet, as we have seen, gave this the first place when discussing the characteristics of his art, and he might well do so, for no English poet had a finer gift of musical expression than he. Spenser, perhaps, alone (and that only occasionally) can be considered altogether his equal for sweetness of versification. Take, *e.g.*, the opening stanza of the fragmentary "Dark Ladie:"

Beneath yon birch with silver bark,
And boughs so pendulous and fair,
The brook falls scatter'd down the rock,
And all is mossy there !

Apart from the great beauty of these lines as a picture in words, their effect on the ear is one of sweet, sustained, and satisfying sound. We see here how a great poet produces his effects. Not a single unusual word or expression is used, the language is simple in the extreme, and yet the impression left both on the mind and the ear is that of the highest poetry. The little piece called "Love," extracted from the introduction to this fragment of a ballad, might not unfitly

test a reader's possession of an ear for the music of verse. Of the melody of "Christabel," and of some of the means by which that melody is produced, something has already been said. Nor is it only sweetness, bewitching sweetness, that is noticeable in this verse. Sergeant Talfourd said of Coleridge, that he possessed "a facile power of melody, varying from the solemn stops of the organ to a bird-like flutter of airy sound." We certainly cannot claim for Coleridge that he was master of that depth and volume of sound which swells like organ-music through the poetry of Milton; but something analogous—something far more than mere rhetorical sonority—pervades such lines as these from the "Chamouni:"

Ye ice-falls! ye that from the mountain's brow
 Adown enormous ravines slope amain—
 Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice,
 And stopped at once amid their maddest plunge!
 Motionless torrents! silent cataracts!
 Who made you glorious as the gates of heaven
 Beneath the keen full moon? Who bade the sun
 Clothe you with rainbows? Who, with living flowers
 Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet?

2. Imaginative power. We see Coleridge's imagination both in the choice and treatment of his subjects as wholes, and in his use of natural imagery. Shakspeare's "Venus and Adonis" (says Coleridge in the *Biographia Literaria*) "seem at once the characters themselves, and the whole representation of these characters by consummate actors. You seem to be told nothing but to see and hear everything." In "The Ancient Mariner," Coleridge not only chose a subject remote from his own private interests and circumstances, but infused into it so much dramatic power that it has for us—for the time—all the force of reality, and we seem to be ourselves witnesses of the strange events which transpire. In "Christabel" we are not so completely under the spell.

Perhaps to have made the scenes and characters more vivid would have interfered with the impression of perfect beauty which the poem was intended to produce. Coleridge again, like every true poet, gives us no mere descriptions of nature. The beauty which he sees in the external world passes through his own nature and is transformed by his imagination before being reproduced in his verse. Thus we get from him something of the charm and movement of nature herself, not the mere dry cataloguing of its details.

How finely imaginative is the address in the "Dejection" to the wind rising towards midnight!

Thou Wind that ravest without,
Bare craig, or mountain-tairn, or blasted tree,
Or pine-grove whither woodman never clomb,
Or lonely house, long held the witches' home,
Methinks were fitter instruments for thee,
Mad Lutanist! who in this month of showers,
Of dark brown gardens, and of peeping flowers,
Mak'st Devils' yule, with worse than wintry song,
The blossoms, buds, and timorous leaves among.

A multitude of instances might be given of Coleridge's unique gift of interpreting nature. I will only mention the lines on a cataract falling over a mountain precipice, in a poem expanded from Stolberg, which begins:

There's a cloud at the portal, a spray-woven veil,
At the shrine of his ceaseless renewing—

and the exquisite imaginative picture contained in two lines of the little piece called "Work without Hope"—

. . . winter slumbering in the open air
Wears on her smiling face a dream of spring!

3. Spontaneity. Though the language which Coleridge often uses is extremely simple, and such as any man might have employed, it has almost always this mark of true poetry, that it leaves on the mind the effect of something perfect, something of which you could not alter a word

without breaking the charm. There is no appearance of effort about the best of Coleridge's work—poetry and song seem to have flowed from him as naturally as a brook from its source or melody from a nightingale's throat. Mr. Swinburne says well of "The Ancient Mariner:" "here is not the speckless and elaborate finish which shows everywhere the fresh rasp of file or chisel on its smooth and spruce excellence; this is faultless after the fashion of a flower or a tree. Thus it has grown; not thus has it been carved."

Coleridge is the most poetical of poets. "If you could see his poetry in a phial (says Leigh Hunt), like a distillation of roses (taking it, I mean, at its best), it would be found without a speck." But then, as Hunt admits, the best is, comparatively speaking, small in amount. If we compare Coleridge with Keats (as having together given the highest expression to beautiful conceptions), we shall see that while the former at his best is the more poetical, Keats preserves more uniformly the element of true poetry. The latter never descends to prose. His earlier poems, though often weak and wordy, have some of the bard's genuine inspiration. The eloquent rhetoric of such a piece as the "Religious Musings" would have been impossible to him. To Shelley, Coleridge has an affinity in this respect, that both aspired to be philosophers as well as poets. But the former early resigned metaphysics in favour of poetry, though in his poems the artistic effect was often somewhat subordinated in his own mind to the presentation of those views about man and the universe, which he held to be of such importance to the welfare of mankind. Coleridge, on the other hand, cultivated poetry and philosophy, on the whole, independently—the former perhaps engaged more deeply the affection of his earlier years, the latter of his mature life—but both of them he loved and worshipped with a disin-

terested affection. That his poetry reveals much of that "depth and energy of thought," which he considered so essential for a great poet's equipment, cannot be doubted, and yet his special metaphysical and religious views betray themselves rarely, except in a very few of the earlier poems. To poetry Coleridge seems to have fled as a refuge from his mental and spiritual perplexities, and certainly few men have ever praised her more generously or more gracefully than he has done in an oft-quoted passage; "Poetry has been to me its own 'exceedingly great reward;' it has soothed my afflictions; it has multiplied and refined my enjoyments; it has endeared solitude; and it has given me the habit of wishing to discover the Good and the Beautiful in all that meets and surrounds me."

The remains which Coleridge left behind him as the result of his various intellectual activities are, on the whole, fragmentary in character, and we may regret, not unnaturally that a man of such splendid endowments should, through a defect of will or a too great dispersion of energy, have done so little. "So gifted," says Sergeant Talfourd in his *Final Memorials of Charles Lamb*, "Coleridge glided from youth into manhood, as a fairy voyager on a summer sea, to eddy round and round in dazzling circles, and to make little progress, at last, towards any of those thousand mountain-summits which, glorified by ærial tints, rose before him at the extreme verge of the vast horizon of his genius." And yet we have much to be grateful for. Apart from the influence of his spiritual teaching on a few chosen minds, and the inspiring eloquence of his conversation, he tried no field of literary work in which he did not achieve a very considerable degree of success. Poetry, the drama, criticism, journalism—in all he has distinguished himself; and in two departments, as a poet and a literary critic, his place is eminent and assured. We may fitly address him in some

words of his own, extracted from a piece which he meant perhaps as a sort of *apologia pro vitâ sua*, and thus take our farewell of one who (spite of his faults) was both great and good :

O framed for calmer times and nobler hearts !
O studious poet, eloquent for truth !
Philosopher ! condemning wealth and death,
Yet docile, childlike, full of life and love !





A VENETIAN SKETCH.

BY THOMAS KAY.

The minstrel was infirm and old;
The withered cheek and tresses grey
Seemed to have known a better day.—SCOTT.

I HAD slept with the window open, and the sounds from “out-of-door” Venice had awakened me. The cry of the gondoliers at the corner of the little canal, the confused murmur from ships loading and unloading in the Giudecca, the soft throb of the little steamers which ply about; the tink, tink, tink on a vessel, perhaps miles away, undergoing repair, and the dull hammering with wooden mallets of dried fish on the mooring posts of the Riva, were heard clearly through the morning air.

Arising, I looked outside; the morning was a pale grey, with undefined low-hanging clouds. San Giorgio, with its ruddy campanile and white-marble façade, was reflected in the calm sea and haziness dimmed the distant Liddo, the Giudecca and Grand Canals. Suddenly a slight breath of wind passed across the water, marking a ripple line sharp as the wake of a wild fowl on a mere. The grey clouds began at once to move, and they descended in vapour, enveloping the Salute and the palaces of the Grand Canal in their embrace. The sun as quickly gleamed on the figure of Fortune holding high the sail of commerce above the mundane globe upon which she pirouettes to the breeze; and as

tenderly as a bridegroom takes off the veil from his beloved, so did the sun lift up the fog from Venice, changing the colour of the water from an ashen grey to a delicate turquoise, and flashing on the wavelets sparkling coruscations of light to environ and adorn her elegance. Beautiful Venice! Bride of the sea! thou art as charming this spring morning to me as thou couldst have been in those past times when wedded to the Adriatic, although the pomp and vanity of paltry show are absent.

A thin tinkle, tinkle sound from a weedy guitar was heard from below, and an ancient minstrel, blind and bent with age, was led forward by a woman. He faintly preluded with the strings; and the woman, with anxious gaze, scanned the windows above. She, like other Venetian women, was bare-headed, and wore the *savate*,* in the usual slipshod fashion. The old man at first began to sing in a feeble, quivering voice; but gaining strength as he proceeded, he trolled forth the Italian song as one who had gained triumphs on a higher stage than this.

His song being ended and meeting with no response, the woman in a melancholy manner took him again by the hand to lead him onwards. He looked weaker and more aged than before, and his knees seemed to tremble under him. He was singing, perhaps with an unbroken fast, or was humbled with the thought that his voice could no longer obtain largesse. At the sight of such silent misery, a shower of coins descended upon the pavement and the good-natured bystanders helped the woman to gather them. Revived by the tribute, as Scott's last minstrel by the stoup of wine, the troubadour fingered again his guitar, and with renewed vigour poured forth his thanks in song. The couple returned the way they

* High-heeled slipper with only a toe-piece.

had come, it being evident that he had earned their breakfast, and when, shortly afterwards, they again passed my window, they were eating polenta, and wore a more contented mien.

Poor players of the streets, with only the Rialto for your stage, the heavenly orbs for your lights, and the darkness of night for your curtain. You approach the "second childishness and mere oblivion" which must close your mortal career, and the curtain of death must shut out the fairy scene of to-day, "the cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces, the solemn temples, the great globe itself, yea, all which it inherits" of human hopes and joys, triumphs and failures, despair and weariness; yet it will rise again for you on another stage that eye has not seen nor ear heard, and of which man cannot conceive the glory.

Play on, poor player! Shine on, good sun! Help still, ye generous! Measure not your charity, consider not your gain; but as kindly as this southern sun cheers his decaying powers, give the mite to dissipate the few remaining clouds between him and his awakening. Let holy pity envelope him "who gives and him who takes" in the loving kindness which makes the whole world kin in the name of that "gentle dew from heaven" *Mercy*, "the attribute of God."





A PORTRAIT.

BY A. STANSFIELD.

A SPRIGHTLY maiden, with a sprightly name—
A lithesome maiden, and so very tall
For sixteen years you would her woman call
That's girlishly inclined to romp and game—
A frolic wilding that 'twere sweet to tame,
But hard ; yet not too hard for him that counts
No *easy* pleasure "pleasure," and that mounts,
Fighting his way, up to the heights of Fame.
A maid so full of provocations sweet,
And words and ways which, while they pique you, please,
That though you vow revenge when next you meet,
And lay such plans as she shall *not* defeat,
And think of all contrivances to tease,
You still must end by falling at her feet !





AN ARTIST'S TRIP TO THE RIVIERA.

BY WILLIAM ROBINSON.

ON a Wednesday morning, about the middle of January, 1883, from a roadside station near Manchester, I set out for the south of France. And as finances were not very flourishing, and the trip was somewhat speculative, I chose that route from London to Paris which is mostly patronized by economical Frenchmen, and went *via* Newhaven and Dieppe. Among the occupants of the compartment of the carriage in which I took my seat was a somewhat demonstrative and characteristic Frenchwoman, who kept searching her pockets, basket, and purse for a missing half-sovereign. However, at last she gave it up, and, taking off her bonnet, thrust her hand into bundle and basket and produced two handkerchiefs, a green one and a white one; then, with the help of a nondescript cap, bound round by the said handkerchiefs (giving to her a somewhat striking appearance), she tried occasionally to have a little nap. A couple in a corner by-and-by produced a large loaf and a ham-shank—then, alternatively cutting and carving, they certainly put a good deal of it out of sight. However, at last we arrived at Newhaven. A young Frenchman in the train having previously told me that we might go on board at once and take a berth (or cushion) by paying an additional two shillings, I proceeded at once to prepare myself for the avoidance of

sea-sickness, if possible, by lying down flat upon my back. This position I maintained most stoically until we were within less than an hour of our destination. On board the boat there seemed to be a number of one party, for an elderly Irish gentleman coming from the first-class cabin paid the extra shillings for some twelve or fourteen of them. One of these, also an Irishman, was eagerly looking towards the approaching land, and said to me: "And is that France?" "Sure I never thought I should have lived to see France!" "I have come all the way from the north of Ireland!" Now, I have myself heard of people coming from even greater distances. I am not sure that the visit of some of the people on board had not some connection with either political or socialistic matters—perhaps there was a contingent of the "International." Certainly the journey from Dieppe to Paris in a most miserable third-class carriage tended to confirm my suspicions. Nay, I did not even feel very safe in the midst of them. There was the "boss," as he appeared, a sort of dressed-up rough, and a miserable, slouching, nothing-to-lose Italian, occasionally gnawing a piece of bread. A sort of understanding seemed kept up amongst them. And by such words as "they will land at Naples by such a date," or "they would leave New York at such a time," they seemed to refer to some other detachment which they were expecting to meet. Surely, I thought, the "rights of man" would be in strange hands if they had to be manipulated by such as they! But I must proceed with my journey. I may say, once for all, that I had no trouble with my baggage. I had merely to say that I was "artiste-peintre" and they passed me without more ado. Perhaps they thought that one whose wealth lay in earth, sea, and sky was not likely to busy himself with contraband articles. But I have heard of artists who were addicted to smoking! The road from Dieppe to Paris

is interesting and beautiful. From Dieppe to Rouen an Englishman in praising it might say it reminded him strongly of many parts of rural England. From Rouen to Paris, however, the Seine was out ; and flood and fog reigned with dreary sway. Far as the eye could see a waste of waters ! It is sad to gaze on such a muddy waste as this. Though extensive as vast lakes, it has none of their beauty. Hedgerows are indicated, but without their banks. Rootless trees sway to and fro in sea-girt misery, and boatless islands stand out here and there in chilling isolation. The fog increased as we neared Paris. After leaving the station at St. Lazare I was somewhat bewildered, scarcely knowing my bearings, as it was some sixteen years since I had visited Paris, and even then I had not been in the neighbourhood of the Bastille. A cabby asked me some five francs to drive to the Gare de Lyon, so I looked out for an omnibus, and managed to convey myself and luggage for threepence. Having deposited my bag and parcel at the station for the modest sum of one penny (!)—(this is one of the things they manage better in France)—I rambled a little in the neighbourhood of the Pont d'Austerlitz and the Jardin des Plantes. Then, returning to the station, although very tired, I was anxious to continue my journey, and whilst waiting about, uncertain what class or train to take, I recognized a young man whom I had seen on the boat. He was going to Geneva, I believe. He had with him, however, a dark-looking foreigner, who also nodded to me as I recognized the other young man. And, as I was looking after the times and fares of the various trains, the dark young man seemed anxious to advise me in the matter ; and with an affected solicitude for my financial welfare—which, alas for human nature, was in itself a suspicious circumstance in a perfect stranger—he pointed out to me that it would be much better to go to an hotel for the night. He knew of one close by, a

very good hotel, where we could get a good bedroom for two francs ; nay, he even hinted that we might share the room (!), which made me stare and keep off—or we could each have a room, and then, after a good night's rest, go by a morning special train for Nice, for forty-two francs the return journey. Less than half the single fare! And it would be so much nicer, he said, to have company on the way. However, I did not fall in with the plan, feeling a strong repugnance to the fellow. The other young man said very little, though urged repeatedly by the dark one to speak with me, he being English and the dark one not very fluent with the language. I left them, and went to get a cup of tea at the refreshment room ; then returning towards the booking-office I saw them again. The Englishman was going on by the 9-40 p.m., which I also purposed going by, when the dark one again renewed his advances, saying he had taken his lodging, and I could have one also at the same hotel. The advertisement of the trip was before one's eyes—"we could take our tickets at once." But saying I thought of going on by the 9-40, and finding he prevailed nothing, I noticed, casually, a dreadful expression on his face, which settled me at once to get out of his presence at any rate—sleepy as I was ; so I at once went and asked for my baggage. As it was being handed to me, an interpreter of Messrs. Cook, I believe, whispered to me :—"Excuse me, do you know that young man?" I said "No, but the light-complexioned one came over in the boat when I did." "Oh, indeed," he said, "I do not know anything of him ; he looks right enough ; but I do not like the dark one. He wants to get you to himself that he may rob you of your money. I would have nothing to do with him. But do not let him know that I have advised you." I thanked him, and told him I was just going to take my ticket for Lyons, or Marseilles, and would go second-class. "That is right," he said,

"there are so many of these suspects about, that one has to be very careful." I then waited and saw the Englishman take a third-class ticket, when, letting them clear away, I took a second-class for Lyons, and saw no more of them.

I have mentioned this incident to show one of the risks which unsuspecting and solitary travellers run in strange towns, when their track is marked by the artful and ill-disposed. Knowing that I was going out was itself sufficient to say that I had a considerable sum of money with me. When looking back upon this and similar dangers through which I have passed, I realize more fully the ever-watchful care of a Divine Father. I obtained an apology for sleep on the road to Lyons; although, looking out during the night and at grey dawn, I saw the Saone was, like the Seine, flooding all the land for many miles. Having half an hour to wait at Lyons, I refreshed myself with a "café au lait," and re-booked third class to Marseilles. Two young fellows occupied the same compartment, and settled themselves for sleep by putting one of the long foot-warmers across the seats, under the cushions, by way of pillows, and wrapping themselves over with a sort of shawl. I was greatly interested in the country as we went along towards Marseilles. The rapid Rhone flows through the broad and fertile valley, which is covered with entirely new vegetation, vines, olives, &c.; and there was a change, too, in the general colour and character of the dwellings. More light and warmth prevailed; and it seemed as if the gray film of mist which veiled the northern light was being cleared away, while burnished sunlight gilded the distant hill tops with a new glory. To the right of the valley was that chain of mountain fastnesses which, in times of religious persecution, formed hiding-places for the hunted Huguenots. A grand range they seemed, with many a castle frowning over the entrance to the mountain defiles. Far away in the south-east the heights which

overlook and guard the Riviera were glorious with the light of the setting sun, looking in the distance like golden gates to a land of promise, the rain, fog, and mist, which had accompanied one hitherto, seeming fading away. The pines, acacias, aloes, and other large-leaved exotics which grow around Marseilles told that here was the passage birds' wintry home. And yet the weather began again to be not quite what one could have desired, for as we reached Marseilles it was raining heavily and quite dark.

I put up for the night near the station, and had my first hap-hazard experience of a French hotel-restaurant. Following a dark mulatto servant up a winding stone staircase of a somewhat "star chamber" pattern, and along dark corridors, I entered my "chambre." A mixture of bareness and faded sumptuousness seemed to be the style of it. However, I found a good bed, and slept well upon it, for I was worn out. I found here, and had it abundantly confirmed elsewhere, that those places of convenience which our boards of health are supposed to look well after were sadly deficient in light and air. And the general back-of-behind habits of the people are by no means cleanly. The ordinary run of English tourists see very little of the French at home. Travelling first-class "rapide," and always putting up at the regulation hotels, where everything is kept as much as possible *à la Anglaise*, they are simply foreigners with foreign surroundings. I found the people generally obliging and polite. Officialism, however, holds a tight rein, especially in travelling. You have just to keep to the regulations of the road and you get along all right. I was up in the morning in time for the 7-30 train for Mentone. It seemed to go upon the principle that a day's work might be done any time in the course of a day. Resting an unconscionable time at every roadside station, and giving twenty-five minutes for lunch, it seemed as if the journey was to be

taken in "numbers." Then we were shunted into a siding for a long time, just as if we had been "cheap-trippers," waiting for a "rapide" or two to pass, until we finally reached Nice just in time for the train after the one we should have caught. It was not a favourable time for seeing the beauties of Nice, being dark, and English wintry weather following hard after one—rain—rain—rain! From succeeding journeys to and fro in the daylight, I found the whole route a very enjoyable and picturesque one. Outside Marseilles there are some grand heights crowned with fortifications, whence one might get a wonderful *coup d'œil*. And I noticed that the vegetation grew more luxurious as we advanced. The olives especially, which had been mere bushes or scrubby little trees on the other side Marseilles, now became more like forest trees.

At Fréjus, there are evidently considerable records of the Romans, who for a long time held sway over this district. A fine amphitheatre seemed as if it would make a capital subject for a painter; and several old-world fragments of buildings also. And then the glorious range of volcanic-looking hills, called Les Estrelles, with their grand rocks of porphyry, and peculiarly rugged and picturesque little inlets—wild enough for Salvator, and lonely enough for brigands—the railway cuts straight through them; then opens out into that grand sweeping bay, at the other side of which stands the town of Cannes, with the Bocca, or wooded district, between. Cannes owes much of its reputation as an English place of winter resort to the late Lord Brougham, who frequented it and died there. The Cannois have expressed their indebtedness to him and respect for his memory by the erection of a marble statue placed in the centre of a square named after him. His monument in the beautiful little English cemetery is an immense plain stone cross. When staying at Cannes last season, I was much interested in

comparing the two cemeteries—English and French—separated only by a wall. The French or Catholic cemetery was furnished to death with all sorts of showy forms of grief—some rich, others tawdry, but all strikingly demonstrative. And on the tombstones the repeated wail of the mourners, or the despairing cry of the departed, who even on his tomb says “pray for me”—all combine to intensify the pangs of separation without the loftier sentiment of a risen and emancipated soul. In the English cemetery, on the other hand, one walks quietly round among the neatly-arranged and chastely-designed memorials of affectionate regard, and the inscriptions are generally such passages of scripture as ring with the sound of victory—an onward and hopeful call—breathing a spirit of love and trust, or recording the virtues of a well-spent life. The contemplation of it all left a healthy feeling in the mind, elevating manhood and the spiritual in man. Two years ago Cannes received as a visitor—shall I say “a nobler Roman than they all”—one whom the French papers called “Lord” Gladstone; but last season Cannes was regarded with a mournful interest. The sad event will be in the memory of you all. I will not detain you with the pleasant little trips to the isles of St. Marguerite and St. Honorât, in the former of which Marshal Bazaine was confined, and from which he escaped to more pleasant quarters, I presume, in Spain.

Let us return to Nice, where we had arrived in the dark and wet, ready for the train for “Menton.” Though Nice is the favourite town for gaiety and pleasure, we must leave its seventy thousand inhabitants and hurry on past those immense rocky bulwarks surrounding the quaint mountain village of Eza, and surmounted by that old Saracenic ruin called Turbia. As I hear them call out “Monaco,” then “Monte Carlo,” what ideas arise in one’s mind of splendour shielding vice—the world, the flesh, and the devil in seduc-

tive guise. It is eight p.m. as we reach the last town on the French frontier—Menton. I alight in the dark and wet, a stranger to the land and people, unknowing and unknown. A sense of loneliness comes over me. I wait until the long array of omnibuses has vanished. Then depositing my "bagage" I sally forth towards the town. I enter a large boulevard or street, with rows of immense plane trees, and which in the daylight proves to be the "Avenue de la Gare." Passing some imposing-looking buildings, I come to an hotel and restaurant of neat and modest appearance, suited, as I think, to my purpose and purse. On the window I read "On prend des pensionnaires," so in I go, and with the polite and straightforward host soon make arrangements to stop awhile. The window of my room has a south-western aspect, and commands a beautiful view from Cap Martin to the grand pile of mountains behind which descends the setting sun. The little hotel is quiet and well regulated, managed and mainly waited upon by the indefatigable host, his wife and daughter. As I awoke and looked out of the window the beautiful southern sun was flinging his glorious light over groves of olives, lighting up the villas embosomed in them, and bringing out the fine features of the craggy heights which rose behind. Out to the left is the gleaming of the lovely sea. And this was the depth of winter! Truly a new world to me! Need I say that eyes and feet were busy admiring and exploring on that beautiful Sunday?

With the Monday morning I was up the Carrei valley ere the hoar frost had been chased by the rising sun. A grand subject to begin with! Olives, oranges, cypresses, and firs filling up a great part of the narrowing valley—two or three nice little arches spanning the stream which flowed through it, and leading to a house on its banks. The banks themselves were clothed with bamboos and various wild shrubs. Above and behind was the little church and village of Monti,

whilst the rugged [Roulabra and other heights built up the background. I pitched my easel on the road side. Various were the incidents which passed. The people are abroad early, and this is the road to Turin. First a drove of bullocks coming down—those great, mild-looking, large-horned brown beasts. Then a woman with a herd of goats of various shades. Then mules with their trappings and bells, drawing their long narrow carts, with great loads piled upon them. And the patient asses frequently passing to and fro; laden often with a keg of wine on each side and another on the back, or the driver in place of the third. Sometimes they are almost buried in a load of greenstuff or sticks, and urged on by the strange sounds of *issa, ee-a or animo*, with the occasional accompaniment of a stick. The ass and mule are the true mountaineers' friends. Without them, life in those apparently inaccessible heights would be impossible. Lower down the valley, nearer the town, the broad bed of the river, dry for the most part, is lively with groups of washerwomen kneeling by the little running stream, soaping and batting—scrubbing, dipping, and wringing their piles of linen. As I return down the valley the sun is shining through a lovely atmosphere, colouring everything. The effect and scene are irresistible. Down go my traps and I am at work again. In the distance may be seen the "town mill," consisting of a series of four or five mills and wheels piled one above another. Near me, on the road, stands a small deep cart which two women are filling with oranges and lemons. A shepherd, with his great picturesque cloak over his shoulders, is lingering on the road while his flock ramble up and down nibbling at anything they can find. Like the shepherds of the Scriptures these southern ones lead, not drive, their flocks, and as they have no fields to put them in, they lead them about all the day—by the beds of the streams, along the road sides, under the

olives, or over the hills—wherever they are likely to find anything to eat. After lunch I go up the Borrigo valley and then turn off up a narrow valley, along what is by turns a road and a stream. At the head stand the grand rocky heights of St. Agnes. But the sun soon leaves these deep valleys, and the paper grows damper instead of drying before four o'clock.

Mentone is a capital centre for subjects for the pencil. Its surroundings are wonderfully fine. So many valleys and roads leading up into the midst of the mountains, and the old town, harbour, bay, and sea, the groves of olives and pines, the beautiful Cap Martin, the grandeur of the rocks at the Gorge St. Louis, &c., &c., make it hard to quit. But how human nature clings to old things and traditions. In these southern towns into what holes and dens do the miserable inhabitants creep, and with a magnificent country surrounding them! In olden times, when the Moors and Saracens were continually making descents upon them, one can quite understand their huddling together on some bold defiant promontory; and with forts, walls, and gates building upwards rather than spreading out laterally, and binding the houses with arches across the narrow streets to resist the shocks of earthquake to which they are liable. But that they should still cling to and root in these dark unwholesome dens is surely the force of habit. It is similar in our own large towns. I remember one Whit-week, among the crowds of people filling the carriages to Bowdon, hearing a woman say, as she looked out of the window and saw the fields between Old Trafford and Stretford, "Eh! I shouldn't like to live in the country (!) it looks so lonesome!"

These southern towns are very thickly populated. But once out of the towns you are in the open country. Very few straggling suburbs, excepting fashionable visiting quarters, where villas are built for winter residence. One

morning I went over the Pont St. Louis to see Dr. Bennett's garden, which is terraced on the slopes of the rock on the Italian side of the bridge. As I came near to the first building, having with me, as a parcel, a piece of milled board with paper stretched upon it for sketching, two Italian gendarmes pounced upon me and took me at once into the building, which I found was the Italian Douane, to have my parcel examined. The official inside opened it, looked somewhat suspiciously at it, and seeing a little crack where the paper was beginning to come off slightly, he was going to have loosened it rather more, I thought if I had not stopped him, telling him what it was for in my broken French. He just peeped into the crack, and, finding nothing, melted into politeness itself; and the gendarmes volunteered every information as to the way into the garden. They had evidently precious little to do. There was another path by the shore, under the Roches Rouges, by which you can climb up into the main road again. So there is another officer stationed close by the stream coming out of the "Gorge." The stream itself is utilized, as it runs into the bay, by several washerwomen, and the shore itself becomes a drying ground. I will not trouble you to go with me to all my sketching spots, as you are not all used to the exposure, and might get a chill, but the beauty and interest of the Corniche Road are inexhaustible. What lovely scenes one gazes upon from the turn leading down to Monti Carlo! But if we keep along the Nice road instead of turning down, we come to Roccabruna, with its old tradition respecting its singular position, which is attributed to the malevolence of the Evil One, who, it is said, was pushing the place down from its high position one night, when either the striking of the church bells, or the earnestness of the prayers of the monks, caused him to desist and flee away, leaving it as it now stands. Suburban Mentone is divided into east and

west bays, with the old town of "Menton" or "the chin" standing up between. If I were an Irishman, I might say the east bay was the "West End," being principally affected by the English. It is particularly mild and warm from its completely sheltered position.

After leaving Mentone I went on to Ventimiglia, the first Italian town built on another promontory. Here the French line ends and the Italian begins; and you have to advance your watch some thirty-five minutes, and get your luggage inspected. I found good lodging and Italian fare at Hotel Baptiste, near the bridge. With the exception of the hostess, who spoke French, everything was Italian, and I was consequently rather lonely during the long evenings. I stayed seven days, and got through a good deal of work. Looking up the valley of the Royât, you have here a view of the snow mountains, from which a violent flood must come sometime or other, judging from the width of the river's bed. But the shepherds were using it for pasturage during the winter.* Ventimiglia is an old fortified town, the fortifications being "ancient and modern." And the dark, tortuous, and narrow passages or streets are some of the most mysterious I have seen. Having found my way somehow to the Cathedral Square, in the midst of everything thoroughly Italian, I saw in a little confectioner's shop the well-known features of an English biscuit canister, with Peak Frean's biscuits upon it—the only bit of English, I think, in the place. My next resting-place was San Remo, much frequented by the English, and a considerable town. Of course I ought to have stayed at Bordighera, with its splendid palm trees and magnificent coast views, but I did not. You may be pretty sure you are in the English quarter at San Remo when you see

* I see from an article in the *Art Journal* that Hannibal and his Carthaginians are supposed to have passed along the Royât valley on their way to the memorable "crossing of the Alps and invasion of Italy."

"London Hotel" and "West End Hotel." The old town, however, though picturesque, is old and dirty enough. Whilst at San Remo the weather was unusually wet and miserable. But mine host assured me it was by no means the weather of the country. "No, indeed," said Signor Bonetti, a native artist who dined with us regularly, "clear, cloudless sunshine for three months together—that is San Remo." However, I had very comfortable quarters and was well cared for by M. Molinari, who, at my departure, kindly gave me addresses of all hotels I might need on my route. We were a nice little party at table. The artist and his mother—also an Italian lieutenant and another Italian gentleman of decided radical views. An argument was sometimes started between them, and I had an opportunity of witnessing the violent gesticulation and energetic action which accompanied the flow of oratory. I began sometimes to think it was well the lieutenant—a very pleasant and genial soul—had put his sword on the side table before sitting down to dinner! But it was all a friendly conversation. I found the little street children of San Remo very troublesome in their importunity for the "little sous."

One morning, standing on the edge of an aqueduct outside the town, with the little river flowing below, under bridges, and beside an olive mill, a girl came to me with her little bunches of wild flowers, thrusting them under my nose almost to make me take them. I could not send her away, but from the position of my easel she could not stop me from gazing at the olive woods above and beyond. Finding that her impertinent persistence availed nothing, nor that of her brother, who also came, they went away a few yards, when presently I felt a slight sprinkling on my face and neck, and, turning round, I beheld the young monkeys in the act—the girl of dipping a long bamboo into the aqueduct and giving it to the boy who stood on the road

above, and he shook it at my drawing or myself. My wrath was poured forth in English, French, and any broken word of Italian I could lay hold of, in such vigour as caused their retreat, and I was left in peace. On my recounting the experience to Bonetti, he told me of certain encounters he had had with them himself, and said he believed they were the most troublesome children of any place he had been in. The Italian gentleman was greatly incensed at the maliciousness of the urchins, and said it would be necessary to take a policeman with me next time—"yes, indeed, it is shocking to think of spoiling the drawing." But just fancy an artist sketching with an escort of police! However, as it was "carnival" a day or two after, perhaps they were worse than usual on that account. I am not going to describe the ingenious or outrageous nonsense, drollery, and display which characterized the processions, but there were certain special performances at the theatre, one of which I attended, the opera being "Faust." There were certain fireworks and a good band in the "Jardins de l'Imperatrice." I observed that both here and in other towns on my route the numerous street and wayside shrines were mostly suffering from neglect, abuse, or decay. They remind me of the dolls and other images which might be found in some nursery which the former inmates had outgrown—relics which had been the objects of infantile affection and reverence. But, too often when emerged from this stage of existence, proud, impassioned youth, regarding these things with a somewhat self-satisfied feeling of contempt, rushes into the whirlpool of pleasure and dissipation—looking upon these as the ends of life. In the words of the *Journal de Menton*, he says: "Le plaisir, c'est la santé, alors vive le plaisir!" But ere the true dignity of humanity can be attained either in individual or national life there must be the birth and growth of a deeper and holier reverence for that Eternal and Divine Humanity

after which we are to pattern. To go back to the nursery of childhood is neither possible nor desirable. The ardent and impulsive children of the "land of the Madonna" can only reach their true glory and dignity by the worship of, and true reverence for, the living principles, and not dead imagery of purity, holiness, and self-sacrifice.

From San Remo I passed on to Oneglia, a by no means fashionable place of resort, but a very good centre for subjects either for the figure or landscape painters. Though a town somewhat afflicted with poverty, it possesses one noble street, straight as an arrow, a great part of it flanked by colonnades, and crossing the mouth of the river by a grand suspension bridge, with lofty, white marble supports. Here I may say I was more completely isolated from all social intercourse than during any part of my journey. The host of the "Hotel Victoria"—the only hotel in the place—spoke French, but was always busily occupied. For the rest I was just a worker by day and an observer by night. Here I first made acquaintance with mosquitoes, and had my face considerably altered in contour by their attentions. However, I treated them with the severity of lynch law, and afterwards made better use of the muslin curtains round my bed. One wet morning I went along the quay past the fisherfolks' dwellings and rooms, and entered into one of the workshops amongst a number of men, youths, and children, some of whom were clearing and arranging lines. There was no window in the place. It was just a receptacle for baskets, nets, &c. Sitting down in the far end of the room, and stooping to catch light enough from the door to work by, I made a drawing of them whilst they continued their labours. Of course they thought I was "Francesca," and I did not care to undeceive them. Several of my subjects being some distance up the valley, I was one day anxious to continue the afternoon's theme without returning to

luncheon ; and in the little village where I had been occupied with a wonderfully picturesque street, I noticed a shop with bread, wine, &c., in it. So I went inside, and taking up a couple of large rolls asked how much ? "Decie centissimi" (one penny). Then pointing to the wine, and signifying the quantity by a glass measure, I again asked how much ? "Decie centissimi." Thus for twopence I satisfied my wants and proceeded with my work, returning in time for dinner at half-past six.

On Sunday morning I had a grand walk along the Corniche road to Diana Marina. It was a beautiful morning, though somewhat grey and cloudy. But as I reached the highest point of the road, and gazed out over the boundless expanse—or bounded only by my powers of vision—my breast was full of emotions such as are rarely felt. I do not think I ever saw such a wonderful distance. The sea was calm ; the canopy of cloud was partly broken here and there by the descending rays of sunlight, and the alternations of reflected shades and gleams of light—brightest in the far off distance—carried the eye over an immense track of sea till one seemed to reach a far off Eden where golden cumuli rolled over imaginary hills of fairyland ! And with the contemplation of all this mingled thoughts of home and the dear ones there ! It felt as if the heavens were one great dome, under whose sunlit arch we were all gathered, and the separation was only seeming, or real only from the limitations of sense. Turning to the vast amphitheatre of hills surrounding the bay, I saw a number of interesting towns and villages, some by the shore, others on the slopes or crowning the crests of the hills behind. In the afternoon I tried to reach a town or village on a hillside covered with olive trees, and turned up a road which seemed the only possible way of access. The road went through a dense wood of olives, and wound about

until it rose up a hill, whence at last I could get a glimpse round about me. However, I was not where I expected to be, but was nearing a village on the top of the hill. Coming from it was a person of respectable appearance, of whom I inquired if by pursuing the road through the village I could wind round to Oneglia again. Like most of the respectably-dressed people I met in Italy, I found he understood French, and so he told me that if I passed through the main street, and turned round by the church, I could find my way down to the high road. I found it quite a populous little place, having a large important-looking church, with lofty spire; but I saw no possible way of approach to the place except by mules and asses, for the way down was a series of wide steps for the most part. I thought of the amount of labour it must have cost to erect such structures at such an elevation. Even now I have no idea of the way to the village I was trying to reach.

After spending some eight days in this state of isolation, I went on to Alassio, and at the Hotel de Londres took my seat at a little dining-table exclusively surrounded by English people—five ladies and a gentleman. My power of speech quickly returned, and I spent a pleasant time in this thoroughly Italian town, with one long narrow street running straight through it. It is entirely enclosed by hills, so that the railway both enters and leaves the bay by a tunnel at each end. There is a town, as you enter the bay, called Laigueula, whence you have a good view of Alassio. And here, at Alassio, there are a number of English residents and a nice little English church. It also possesses a good sandy beach, some two-and-a-half miles in length—the only bathing-place along the coast. Consequently it is much frequented by the Italians during summer time, booths, &c., being erected along the shore, giving it quite a gay appearance. Among the varieties of foliage here, which included

olives, citrons, oranges, palms, pines, &c., I noticed a good number of fine caroba trees, of one of which I made a careful study. They cause a nice variation in the colour of the foliage, being of a richer green and less like an evergreen than olives or firs. The forms of the branches are most complicated. The elderly gentleman who was my companion at the hotel said, as I was speaking of the time the caroba tree had taken me to draw—"I saw one to-day, and if you can draw it in three days I'll eat it." I told him I would have mercy on his stomach and not attempt to draw it, as I was so busy with other things. Here I experienced a violent change of weather such as had not occurred for some thirty years. For a length of time it had been clear, almost cloudless, and very hot in the daytime—so much so, that, though sitting just above the sea with its bluish-green waves almost at my feet, I was obliged to cover my hat with a white handkerchief, and turn it round occasionally, to modify the heat. But in the course of two or three days a very wild storm came from seaward, with snow and sleet the whole day and night, and what had been a hot sandy beach was covered with snow, even to the edge of the waves! During the storm a boat, which was at anchor in the bay taking in its cargo of olive oil, rolled about a good deal, its hull being often out of sight. It would have made a very uncomfortable cradle for me! One night I saw from my friend's room, whose window overlooked the sea, a wonderful moonrise. A large disc of quite a ruddy appearance rose slowly above the surface of the water, but there was no shimmer of light from it until it had attained some height above the water. The reason, I presume, was because the light shone upon the side of the waves which was turned away from the spectator. In colour it looked almost like a sunset without radiation of light. I paid several visits to, and made a couple of drawings at, Albenga, an old Roman town a few miles further

on. It is a remarkable place, with a grand view of the distant snow mountains. But it is by no means a healthy place to stay in, from its situation and defective drainage. The site of the present town was formerly a marsh, I should suppose, as the old town, which has been unearthed, is some four or five miles inland. On the high road leading from the present town, and running alongside it, is an old Roman bridge of many arches, with vineyards and fields on either side, some parts of which are very little below the top of the arches. There are some very quaint and picturesque towers or spires in Albenga, which "tell" very well in a view of the town.

From Alassio I took a run over to Genoa for three days as a holiday, and was delighted with the city. Its situation is magnificent; many of its buildings and streets are very fine. But I will not attempt a description of "*Genova la Superba*," as the Italians fondly call it. After a survey of some of the palaces and picture galleries, &c., an ascent of the spire of Santa Maria, in Carignano, whence the finest panorama of the city and country is obtained, a visit to the Campo Santo (the finest in the world, I believe), and a general exploration of the city—its harbour, fortifications, streets, arcades, monuments, &c., &c., I returned to Alassio. Then, after a bitterly cold day's work at Albenga, and a little sketch of a double aqueduct up a little valley covered with maiden-hair ferns, primroses, and violets, I prepared for my return. Calling at Mentone for about three days, I waited upon a gentleman to whom a mutual friend in Bowdon had arranged a kind introduction. In conversation he said, "Were you out sketching beyond the *Roches Rouges*, and looking up towards Grimaldi, on that very cold day when the snow came?" I said "Yes, I was." "Ah," he said, "I thought it must have been you;" and, laughingly, he added, "When my friend from Bowdon

wrote me that you had been here, I said I was sure I had seen you, for I had seen some one out sketching who must either be a lunatic or a stranger to be out on such a day." However, I may say that with the true spirit of a Christian gentleman, he so successfully interested himself in my welfare that, whilst I was adding a couple of sketches to my repertoire, he was insuring the financial success of my trip. Consequently I was able to avail myself of the "rapide" first class only from Marseilles to Paris. Though considerably out of health on my way to Marseilles, I continued my journey the same evening, and was very much better on my arrival in Paris—hungry enough, in all conscience. Miserably wet and dirty it was in Paris; so I pushed on to Boulogne, went to an hotel in time for dinner about seven o'clock, then to bed, rose between one and two o'clock, took the night boat at 2-30 a.m., and was in London in time for breakfast. However, the power of the home magnet increased the nearer I approached it, so I greeted my family with lively satisfaction in the after part of the day, taking tea in mine own little nest near our old familiar town.





EXTRACTS FROM AN ITALIAN NOTE-BOOK.

BY THE REV. W. A. O'CONOR, B.A.

SANTA CROCE, FLORENCE,
Festa of Immaculate Conception,
December 8th, 1884.

ALL the seats are full. People are constantly coming and going. The priests are chanting at the altar or behind it. The organ is playing, and a row of children and a few grown people are kneeling at the altar steps. I sit on the front seat in the right transept, near the Bardi Chapel, where Ruskin's favourite St. Louis is to be seen—but not without much effort. A man with a great black dog held by a chain sits near me. The dog is not awed or astonished, but wags his tail and looks about with a mild curiosity. His master is the only object of his worship, and he looks to him for sympathy now and again. A priest in a black cassock has just passed on his way to the sacristy. He put on his biretta as he went. At that moment the chant recommenced, and he struck in as he walked, taking off his biretta in a half mechanical, half self-indulgent manner. He evidently enjoys taking his part in the chant. I am writing, and no one takes the least notice of me. A priest in front of the altar now reads in a monotone. The people keep moving and replacing each other; yet you cannot say there

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is interruption or inattention. Small children trot in front of the altar rails. The priests also are constantly moving. The white marble statues alone are motionless on their pedestals, some musing, some as if suddenly arrested in an attitude of activity, others giving all their thoughts to the tombs over which they stand. But none of them are listening. They live wholly apart in a world of their own. A poor-looking man has seated himself near me, and glances at me occasionally. I suspect he means to ask me for a soldo. A little boy three or four years old is busily and smilingly arranging a shawl around the neck of a little girl at the other end of the bench. He is now lifting her up on the seat, and a somewhat older girl comes from before the altar and helps him. A single priest commences a service at one of the side altars, with a small group around him. They seem in no degree disturbed by the ceremonial at the great altar. Why should they be? If a man is addressing his God, any other address, however louder and grander, should aid, not interrupt him. If I am doing a small good thing, a great heroic act of another should be an encouragement and a help. Now the great bell of the tower is tolling and outsounding everything. The priests begin to unrobe and go away one by one. The poor man has moved a little nearer to me. As I imagined he meant to ask for a soldo I am expecting and wishing him to do so. I hope he went for the honour of human nature, but in a fugitive kind of way I wish he may for the honour of my suspicion. A new service commences. The man has gone away without asking for the soldo. Hurra! A party of ladies and gentlemen have gone into and gone out of the Bardi Chapel without looking at St. Louis. I hope Mr. Ruskin may never read this. A young man swings a censer. The priests sing in loud, solemn tones, and again the great bells of the tower peal. Now nothing is heard but the peal of the great bells

and the sweet tones of the organ blending in strange harmony. A cloud of incense rises and a small bell tingles. Now nothing is heard but the organ. Now there is silence. A priest begins a chant. Another blows his nose rather loudly. A poor woman kneeling at the altar rails takes courage and does the same. Several priests now kneel close to the altar. They are dressed in long black robes and short white surplices. Each of them puts his hands behind and arranges the folds of his black dress as he kneels. They have now risen and gone away. A little boy, similarly clad, passes by with two decanters in a basket. They jingle as he goes. Four or five priests, in rich yellow robes, stand before the altar. Four boys take enormous candlesticks, with lighted candles in them of proportionate size, and file away, and the priests follow. Two servitors come with long extinguishers and begin to put out the lights. A woman has all this time been kneeling in the Bardi Chapel close to the altar, but with her back towards it, as if she wished to be near, but did not dare to confront it. There is a general movement of departure through the building, but she does not move. She is reading. At the ring of a bell a boy comes from the sacristy carrying a large book, and a priest richly attired follows with the elements. A new service commences. The woman leaves the Bardi Chapel and kneels at the extreme corner of the great altar rail. I am getting cold, and rise.

PENSIONE LUCCHESI.

I walked quickly along the Piazza to get warm, and passed a gentleman with two dogs. They were little black dogs, with collars and bells; one of them was hunchbacked, with unpleasant, jealous eyes, as if he resented being looked at. I never saw a hunchbacked dog before. His owner seemed to bestow particular attention on him, and took special care that he was not left too far behind.

VIEUSSEUX' LIBRARY.

I have come here for a book after lunch and feel in an idle mood. Our company at the Pensione is increasing. Two fresh visitors—Italians—have appeared at table. In speaking of Italians and Germans, we can scarcely avoid using the term foreigners. They are such, of course, to our little English coteries, and one gets into that state of puzzlement exemplified by the Irishman, who asked which is the other side of the street? "That, of course," said the interrogated one, pointing to the opposite side. "Yes," said the Irishman, "but a man told me when I was there that this was it." So when we were on the other side of the water we were told that this was a foreign country, and we can't get rid of the idea. This would not much matter if we could omit the ideas that are commonly associated with it. Two Americans, a lady and a gentleman, have also just come. The gentleman's father was an Italian Jew; he was born in America, educated in England, and wears a wig. His face is made up of all those incongruities, and presents neither dignity nor beauty. It is a very ugly mosaic. The lady with him is not his wife, but a near relative. When this question arose among us, some one told a story. An American couple, newly married, were on their honeymoon travels. The gentleman, undesirous of being stared at, charged his servant not to mention to any one the fact of the recent marriage. After awhile he perceived that he and his wife were objects of universal curiosity. Every one stopped and stared at them. He called his servant, and said, "I hope you have not been telling that we are newly married." "Sure, no," was the answer; "I put them all on the wrong tack, for faith I told them ye were not married at all."

CHURCH OF SANTA TRINITA,
Four o'clock.

I have come in here for a moment or two. Most of the seats are occupied. A fat old official has just gone inside the rails, and is slowly and methodically lighting the candles. As I see the old man patiently and with difficulty reaching his long staff to the higher lights and succeeding at last in increasing the illumination, I begin to wish that some people in our Church, who are bent on enlightening the world, were as innocently employed. Another official in a light-coloured woollen robe has made his appearance. He soon made his office known by shaking a money-box. In order to shake a money-box with proper effect it must have some money in it, while what the action is meant to convey is that there is a want of money. So a little water is required to set a pump successfully going. The collector paused before me as if in doubt. I put my hand in my pocket. This is a ceremony that is understood equally in church or out of church, in Italy and in England. He handed me a little card with a photograph of the virgin on it, and I gave him a small coin.

PENSIONE LUCCHESI,
Six o'clock.

As I passed through the Piazza degli Strozzi, on my way to the Duomo, a crowd caught my attention. It was gathered round a dog seated upright, very gravely and in a business-like way, on his haunches, and a man declaiming on his merits and accomplishments. It was the poorest entertainment of the kind I ever saw, saving for the spirit with which the dog entered into it. He was very small, not very handsome, and could do very little, but he was quite in earnest in what he could do. Sitting on his hind legs was to him the most important concern in life. A non-performing dog soon ran up, and with that hail-fellow-well-met manner

that distinguishes dogs and some others wanted to strike an immediate acquaintance. The performing animal resented the attempt as an intrusion on business hours, flung himself on all his feet, and rushed with an angry yelp on the idler, who immediately took to flight. The other then at once, without waiting for orders, resumed his former position with as much gravity as if he were a magistrate taking his place on the Bench, and as much earnestness as if he were going back to his dinner. This dog confirmed the lesson that it is not the things we do, but the spirit in which we do them that shows and forms character. Were we as much in earnest in standing upright in our duty as he was in his, what heroes we should be!

I went on to the Duomo, and as I entered at the Campanile end, the vast interior seemed empty. A light or two on the side walls at long intervals made the gloomy expanse partially visible. But as I moved on I perceived that there were lights and sounds at the east end. When I arrived there I saw that the transepts and the space between them were crowded, the right transept closely packed, with people. A preacher was addressing this dense audience, and at the same time some twenty or thirty candelabra, all of great size, some of enormous proportions, were being successively lowered, lighted, and drawn up, even in the immediate vicinity of the pulpit. The preacher was not in the least disturbed, nor did any of the audience seem diverted from the discourse. I cannot account for the immense difference that exists in this respect between our churches at home and Roman Catholic Churches in Italy. One day in Rome I was distracted during more than half a sermon which I could not understand, but to which from the force of habit I felt compelled to appear to be listening, by the ineffectual efforts of an official to light a candle at the high altar. Does this difference resolve itself into that between outward and

inward order? With us all is outward order. Only one thing must be done at a time. Any other movement or sound would be a fatal and profane interruption. If the Italians have order it must be internal.

PENSIONE LUCCHESI,

December 9th.

We have several Italians amongst us here. A Contessa and her two daughters have lately arrived. I notice that the English—that is the Irish, Welsh, and English,—for such is the arrangement of numerical proportions, keep aloof from them. The Contessa resembles ladies of equivalent rank whom I have seen at home. She is somewhat robust in person, and her manner corresponds. The two girls are pleasant and well mannered. But our people positively speak of them as foreigners—foreigners, with a sneer, and never speak to them, though the Italians speak English and the English Italian. It is said by our ladies that their ways are different and disagreeable. What those ways are I don't know and don't mean to inquire. It may be some real or imagined want of refinement or delicacy. But the matter must not be allowed to rest here. The true difference between the two nations is, I believe, this, that while in England the separation of classes founded on difference of property has widened and deepened into one of dress, character, and minor morals, in Italy the same separation has had no such consequences. There are rich and poor in Italy as there are here; but the difference between them in manners and customs, that is so visible here, does not exist in Italy. The two classes have never been severed from each other historically by claims of haughty superiority and ways of artificial refinement exclusively on one side. They resemble each in almost all particulars, except that of some being rich and some being poor. That

difference suggests a hundred other inevitable differences to us : nevertheless, they have been escaped in Italy. As a fact, the poor there partake of such refinements as is possible to their condition, and the rich retain those habits of coarseness or indelicacy, or naturalness which the poor cannot get rid of, because of their circumstances. Now let us reflect that well-bred manners amongst us demand that we should seem to be totally free from all the requirements and infirmities of nature, except eating and drinking, which processes must be performed with certain formalities as important as the processes themselves. We must not spit ; we must not use the word stomach. A rich, idle, exclusive caste may arrive in the course of time at perfection in this ethereal pretence : it is wholly beyond the reach of the man who earns his livelihood by the sweat of his brow. The very sweat of his brow or even the name of it cuts him from what is called good society. In Italy, all alike, rich and poor, spit without fear and without reproach. I give that merely as an illustration. We must not disparage refinement ; neither need we enter on the question whether it is better to refine the labouring man up, or to unrefine the idle man down—that would involve a discussion on what refinement really is ; all that is meant to be advanced is that in Italy, instead of a deep gulf fixed, there is a neutral zone of common usages between the rich and the poor. Our people do not like this. There are other sources of prejudice operating. In the large Italian cities there is a class of English, Irish, and Scotch, who are busily engaged in what they call charitable or philanthropic work. There is no necessity whatever for this. There is no human want that has not a national institution amply providing for it. The Italian hospitals are the finest in the world. Our people establish these charitable enterprises merely as stalking-horses for making converts. Every material help that is

given is accompanied with singing a hymn or hearing a portion of Scripture read. The good ladies engaged in those works, which are absolutely unsuccessful in their main purpose, regard the Italians, as persons of the same description in Ireland regard the Roman Catholics in that country. They look on them, that is, as sunk in ignorance and superstition or infidelity, and their priests as men of such immoral habits that they cannot be admitted into any house in which there is a young girl. Such are the exact terms in which the opinion has been expressed to me. They who hold those views will not associate with those of whom they think so ill, and the result is that they know nothing whatever of Italian life. They live for twenty or thirty years here, and only grow stronger in their antagonism to the country and more incapable of forming a correct judgment of its people. When they come together at hotels and pensioni their eyes are open only for grounds of offence, and they find in them some habits which they call vulgar. On the other hand, persons of rank and wealth, but without the proselytizing spirit, English or Americans and Italians, meet on friendly terms, and intermarriages are frequent. I asked the two young ladies why there was not more intercourse between our people and theirs, and they implied that both parties were answerable; but they laid the chief blame on the English, who live they said in a colony of their own and mix only with each other. I questioned the Contessa on the character of the priests, and she described them as holy, self-denying men. When I quoted this it was sneered at as a "woman's description"—by women.

THE DUOMO,

December 10th.

Within a minute's walk from here is the Ghetto. I fell into it unawares, and wandered through it unnoticed. It is in

itself like a small city or a small world. Riches and poverty, work and idleness, seriousness and vanity, with all other human contrasts, are to be found there. Next door to a vile entry, whose foetid breath kindly warns you not to enter—yet I did enter, and found at the end a decent-looking artizan mending shoes at his shop door, conscious only, to all appearance, of the smell of leather—is a clean thriving-looking warehouse, where healthy, well-dressed men follow some wholesome occupation. Amidst squalor and filth, and passages leading to worse than nothing, and stairs that ascend to the depths, are neat vegetable stalls and some of the best butchers' shops I have seen in Florence. In the Piazza di Fonte stands a very old double pump, with ponderous handles on each side, so contrived that a slight application of force brings up the water. Old men and women, with copper cans, kept the stream constantly flowing. The houses are very high in this Piazza; I counted nine storeys. Many of the windows are without frames; but from the highest or the lowest heads might be seen gazing on the outer world, and finding matter for contemplation in the narrow square underneath. Dogs, too, with pricked-up ears, may be seen looking out, like the Athenians, for something new. Individuals and groups are here as elsewhere. One man stood in a reverie; another, in a coat with cuffs and collar of fur, with his hands in his trousers pockets, was laying down the law to two or three others. Young men were chaffing each other, and boys were playing. One pale, shabbily-attired young man, carrying a poor, decrepit, deformed dwarf of nearly his own age on his shoulders, was moving amid the throng of his companions and sharing their sport. He and his burthen had smiles of enjoyment on their thin, pallid countenances. Is it the settled occupation of this poor boy to carry his helpless brother? It looked like it. He seemed to be quite unconscious that he was doing a

duty or suffering hardship; and the cripple was also free from any painful sense of oppressing the life of another. I wonder what those feelings are like! May they not be some unknown blessedness?

PENSIONE L.

What a resource the churches are in Italy! If you are tired or jaded, or irritable and out of sorts, you have always a church near at hand where you may enter and be at peace. When I was writing in the *Duomo*, close to Michel Angelo's unfinished *Pieta*—unfinished not because of the badness of the marble, as it is said, but because great artists rarely can finish forth their conceptions—it occurred to me that the doors might be closed and I shut in, for the *Duomo* closes for a short time in the afternoon. I made for the door, and found I was not a moment too soon. I had half an hour before dinner, so I resolved to ascend the *Campanile*. This is always closed except to the owner of a *lira*, who is willing to cease to be its owner. In no building of the kind have I seen such evidence of solid strength, arising from the staircase being narrow and low and cut as it were out of rocks. There is no handrail or banister, and the ascent is steep. At first it is made in quadrangular flights, then towards the summit you go around a corkscrew stairs, and, reaching the top, see Florence at your feet—no! hundreds of feet below yours. In all directions it spreads and surges until its waves are stayed by the surrounding hills, on whose sides villas, like spray from the ocean city, are scattered. The whole of the balustrade is ornamented with the names of visitors. I endeavoured to express to the guide my disgust at this practice. He misunderstood me to mean that I wanted to add my name to the others, and produced a lead pencil from his waistcoat pocket. The distant view is dreamy and vague. To think on the past or future, or gaze on the remote, is to be absent minded. I did not come here to dream. Let me

gain a definite idea if I can. But how is it possible when the hills are far, far away, and Florence seems still farther below! Out of the roof of the great dome, which is much higher than the tower, glided a hawk; he wheeled on unmoving pinions and settled again among the tiles. His colour is exactly that of the tiles. Here he has his nest and brings up his young. How strange, how suggestive of comparisons, the thought that this wild bird of prey should traverse the country and come back here daily to find sanctuary after his crimes, in the church!

SAN SALVI,

December 11th.

I have walked here to see a cenacolo by Andrea del Sarto in the refectory of the convent. I am now sitting in front of it. It ranks as one of the three best, the other two being by Leonardo di Vinci and Raphael respectively. We are so accustomed to think of poor Andrea only in his unhappy domestic relations and his miserable end, that we are brought before his pictures with a kind of unwillingness—the artificial shrinking from the misfortunes of others which selfish and exclusive regard to happiness has begotten in the priests and Levites of this world, among whom I am chief. The biographers of the painter are to blame for not writing more about his works and less about his wife. This fresco is in an alcove at the end of the refectory. Christ sits with Judas Iscariot on His right hand and St. John on His left. He holds a piece of bread in His hand, and apparently declares the coming treason. He lovingly soothes the excited feelings of John by laying His left hand on that of the beloved apostle. Judas puts his hand to his heart in affected horror, and all the apostles exhibit marks of sorrow and alarm. There is no general indignation directed to Judas: each is fearful and conscience-stricken for himself. Even Peter looks straight before him and ponders silently.

The thought of betraying their Master was manifestly one that had more than once passed through the mind of each one present. The gesture of Christ reassures and encourages the startled and terrified consciousness of St. John. Some gaze sadly at each other with a mutual sense of shame. Others start up as if in astonishment at the discovery of their secret thoughts. But they soon reflect that it was only a fugitive and unwelcomed temptation. Their awakening to self-knowledge shows the stage to which the evil suggestion had gone. Judas alone denies the fully-formed intention. The picture is very beautiful, and as we gaze we think of the painter and forget the hapless husband. In an open balcony above the supper chamber, in the central one of three windows, are the figures of a man and a woman. The man is leaning on the balustrade, and had been looking down on the scene below. The woman passes bearing some vessel or other article in her hands. The man turns from the supper chamber and addresses her. The incident enhances the impression of the fresco. The glimpse of the outer world relieves the too great intensity of feeling which is apt to weary itself when religious topics are regarded apart from ordinary life. Did Andrea think of himself as thus drawn aside from the contemplation of the great topic of his art by a woman!

PENSIONE L.

I learn that Mrs. Jameson has given a different arrangement of the apostles, and I suppose a different explanation of Andrea del Sarto's picture from mine. I mean to read her account.

As I went to San Salvi and returned—the church and convent are some half mile outside the gates—I met several bands of soldiers, chiefly Bersaglieri. Those Italian soldiers have not the rollicking reckless air that distinguishes our redcoats. Even a common soldier in England walks the

street with his cap suspended on one ear, and with a gait and demeanour that intentionally aim at distinguishing the privileged idler and pleasure seeker from the sons of toil. There is no trace of this in the Italian soldier. The Bersagliero, with his ample crest of floating cock's feathers, looks nevertheless a citizen. He never thinks himself in any way different from the people he meets in the highways, or, if he does, he does not show it. At the gates, where tolls are collected from every person who brings any commodity for sale, the collectors, who wear a military dress, are on terms of perfect amity and good-humoured familiarity with the people. Regiments are to be seen in the streets of Florence at all hours, but even in full march and with bands playing before them they do not look soldiers in the idea that the word presents to us. This is not the result of lax discipline, for I have the word of several English officers that the Italian soldiers are well drilled, and show it. It is the feeling of the men that is different. They do not think themselves masters. They were tilling the fields a year or two ago, and will be again a year or two hence. In England regiments are, I may say, not often seen marching through a town. What the appearance of a regiment would be and would suggest is displayed in the demeanour of the individual soldier. In Ireland regiments with bayonets fixed are continually seen in the public ways. In Italy the soldiers are of the people and with the people. In England the appearance of military power is carefully concealed; in Ireland it is ostentatiously displayed. In England the soldier is the most thorough soldier, but he is the soldier of a class. In England manners are the most refined in the world, but it is the refinement of a caste. In England the music in our cathedrals is indescribably more beautiful than any in the Italian churches, but it is the music of the social elect.

PENSIONE L.,

December 12th.

Mrs. Jameson's description of Andrea's cenacolo is as follows: "The cenacolo of Andrea del Sarto, in the convent of the Salvi, near Florence, takes, I believe, the third rank after those of Leonardo and Raphael. He has chosen the self-same moment, 'One of you shall betray me.' The figures are as usual ranged on one side of a long table; Christ, in the centre, holds a piece of bread in His hand; on His left is St. John, and on the right St. James major, both seen in profile. The face of St. John expresses interrogation and a start of amazement. Next to St. James are Peter, Thomas, Andrew, then Philip, who has a small cross upon his breast. After St. John come James minor, Simon, Jude, Judas Iscariot, and Bartholomew. Judas, with his hands folded together, leans forward, and looks down, with a round mean face, in which there is no power of any kind, not even of malignity. In passing almost immediately from the cenacolo in the St. Onofreo to that in the Salvi, we feel strongly all the difference between the mental and moral superiority of Raphael at the age of twenty, and the artistic greatness of Andrea in the maturity of his life and talent. This fresco deserves its high celebrity; it is impossible to look on it without admiration, considered as a work of art."—*Sacred and Legendary Art*, Vol. I., p. 272.

I have just come from the Church del Carmine, where I have been examining a cenacolo by Christofano Allori. It is in a fragment of the refectory, the remaining portion having been walled off, and is entered by a small door on the left side of the cloisters as you go in to them from the church. This work, of which I have seen no description anywhere, is remarkable beyond all other reasons for being almost a facsimile of that of Andrea del Sarto. The important feature in it for my purpose is that the figure on

Christ's right hand, resembling the corresponding one of Andrea del Sarto in all other particulars, has this addition that it holds the purse. There can be no question therefore but that the figure on the right hand of Christ in Andrea's fresco was meant for Judas, and on this identification hangs the interpretation of the painter's idea. The face of Judas is neither mean nor malignant. In both frescoes it is dark and storm-tossed, the hair dishevelled, and the features marked with deep emotion, as befitted the character of a man who could not endure the reflection of his crime. The figure of the traitor is perhaps the most dignified of the twelve. Why should it not be? All the others at this time were weak and vacillating, on the eve of flight and desertion. He alone was determined. Poetic imagination can rise to heights of heroism from which guilt seems a moral monstrosity, and the wretch who practices it crawls like a serpent in the dust. But the artist does not stray from nature who sometimes paints the villain as a fallen angel, and the good man as showing traces of human infirmity. The perfect in evil has greater dignity than the imperfect in good. There is no real moral superiority in Raphael's fresco, and Andrea exhibits truth to nature as well as artistic greatness. In arranging the apostles at table in pictures we must remember the customs of the period. The Passover was first eaten standing as by men in haste. Afterwards it was ordered that it should be partaken of reclining to indicate the security enjoyed from the Egyptian bondage. This explains the meaning of John's position and attitude, and requires that Judas must have been next to Christ on the other side in order to receive the sop. Besides, Judas as the treasurer would hold a foremost place, just as an Ecclesiastical Commissioner would now. A rational estimate of Judas is in course of formation. When he was abhorred and looked down upon

as something grovelling in the lowest pit of sin, there were popes and others who out-Judased Judas a thousand fold. For we must recollect that Judas sold Christ in the same region of misconception and ignorance in which Peter denied him. It was the political Christ not the spiritual Saviour whom Judas betrayed. Some notion of the manner in which the middle ages held Judas aloof from them as inimitable in his guilt at the very time when it was exaggerated and multiplied in new forms of daring profanity never conceived by Judas by their civil and ecclesiastical rulers, may be gathered from the legends invented and circulated concerning him. He was of the tribe of Reuben. Before his birth his mother dreamed that the son she was about to bring forth would murder his father, commit incest with his mother, and sell his God. On his birth his parents enclosed him in a chest and cast him into the sea. He was found and fostered by a king and queen, whose son he killed in a quarrel over a game of chess. He fled to Judea and entered into the service of Pontius Pilate as a page. He afterwards committed the crimes foreshadowed of him, and, learning the secret of his birth, was filled with horror and fled for pardon to Christ, who received him as an apostle. After the betrayal he hanged himself, and burst asunder in the midst that his soul might escape by some other channel than the lips that betrayed his Master. In a poem Lucifer is described as rising from his burning throne to welcome a greater sinner than himself:

Then in his arms he chained the trembling wretch,
And with his black and fiery mouth on stretch
Gave back the kiss that he had given to Christ.

Artists have ascribed to Judas an exterior corresponding to this conception. The Italians represent him with an evil expression, the Germans and Spanish as the embodiment of ugliness. In the legend he is described as beautiful in

U

person. We are never in such danger of doing wrong as when we picture some other wrong as remote, repugnant, and unapproachable. It is better, with a more correct judgment, to raise Judas to his true place, and to keep apart from him by rising above him, not by sinking him below us in an imaginary and inaccessible abyss of guilt.

SAN ONOFREO.

Here is a cenacolo said to be by Raphael. On the walls are more than sixty photographs, engravings, and other copies of different last suppers. In most of them Judas sits on the side of the table next the spectator, by himself. He is generally distinguished by a dog picking a bone at his feet. In that by Leonardo, St. John is on Christ's right hand, and Judas next to him. In Raphael's—not that here ascribed to him, but an incomplete design—John is on Christ's left hand, and a figure closely resembling the figure on the right in Andrea's fresco occupies the same place.

TRAMCAR.

The Italians work and buy and sell to live. English and Americans work and buy and sell to get rich. This is the fruit of a wide induction.

THE UFFIZI,
December 14th.

I have ascended to the gallery by one hundred and twenty-six steps. I notice that in all battles between centaurs and men the man-part of the centaur alone fights; the horse-part, through some sense of honour, never kicks. It would be well if all who have some of the brute in them—and who is without?—bore this in mind.

PENSIONE LUCCHESI.

I went to the Uffizzi intending to go through the covered passage to the Pitti, partly to have a quiet solitary inspec-

tion of the pictures, and partly to form an opinion of the Sunday visitors. The galleries are open to the public on Sundays. Just after I had mounted the stairs I met with some friends, who disturbed my plans. I also found that the covered way between the two galleries is not open on the free days. I walked with one of my friends through the town to the Pitti, and for a few moments got by myself between Michael Angelo's *Parchi* and Titian's *Baccanale*. This latter picture represents a man, who follows a female *Baccante*, as wrapped in the coils of a serpent, from which, with gestures and aspect of despair, he is endeavouring to liberate himself. He is full of self-condemnation, and fiercely tugs at his living chain; but he continues to move on in self-indulgence. He is impatient of a yoke which his actions press and bind upon him. He desires to pursue pleasure but not to be her slave, to wind the links of sinful habit around mind and body and not to feel their pressure, to transgress and not to suffer, to indulge passion and gather no fever and entail no remorse. If he stood still, the serpent would relax its grasp and soon drop off. But he will not stand still. A young satyr goes by his side, a little in advance, dragging a calf's head by a cord. There, again, he may see himself. While I was looking at this picture an Italian woman, dressed, as the poorer Italian women generally dress, in her house clothes merely, but looking, as they all manage to do, not at all in undress, came up and began to look at it also. She was radiant with simple pleasure, and as eager to communicate her happy spirits as to satisfy her child-like ignorance and curiosity. She pointed to the picture and asked its meaning. I knew what she meant to convey more by her smiles and the expression of her countenance than by her words. How was I to explain the deep abstraction of the painter's moral not knowing how to speak a single Italian sentence? Yet I think we understood

each other, and that this poor woman went away with some notion of how vice entangles in evil habit that cannot be torn off, because it is more powerful than the vice itself. The innocent interest with which she referred to the various particulars—the satyr-child, the head of the calf, and all the rest—was almost touching. A custodian, who saw or heard the colloquy, came near to take his share in what was going on. He did not contribute much in favour of my interpretation, for he insisted—though I should not use the word “insist” in reference to his modest suggestion—that the serpent meant “l’amore.” Perhaps this was the most direct, certainly it was the most intelligible and popular way of putting it. The woman seemed to incline to it, for love solves all riddles to a woman. Her manner towards me was beyond expression pleasing. Had she been my sister she could not have been more easily on equal terms; and yet she was deferential and respectful. She was not servile, because she was a woman and I was but a man; she was not forward or free, for she considered that I had some advantage in information; she took a manifest pleasure in speaking with me, and I most certainly took a pleasure in stammering and mispronouncing a few vilely ungrammatical Italian words to her. The custodian went away and came back with a catalogue to throw further light on the subject. The manner of the Italians, high and low, official and unofficial, with each other is that of kindness and mutual consideration. This is their equality.

A few well-informed men or women—gentle, kindly, considerate, sympathetic—going through a picture gallery, and falling into incidental conversation with unlearned individual spectators would convey much instruction and do much good, in the best, if not the only possible way. It would not answer to gather a group around an object of art and give a lecture on it. Anything but that. Conversation,

interchange of ideas, mutual confidence are brought out only when two or three are met together. A beautiful picture or work of art of any kind is seen to most advantage when associated with a human voice and a glance of brotherhood. What can or should a picture teach better than these, and why should these not recommend and hallow it? It may seem as though I imagined that I captivated this poor woman by my condescension. Not at all: it was the woman bewitched me. I shall always remember Titian's picture in the light of this little incident. She was a poor woman, very plainly, almost thinly, dressed, and she was not young; but she was bright and altogether at her ease, and talked and listened as if she considered me her friend. I shall not forget her.

I went to the English church this morning. About thirty people got up and went out before the sermon. In the Italian churches no notice would be taken of this if it occurred. People are continually coming in and going out during the whole service. It would be better if the same thing were done in our churches. This would remove all false feeling on the subject. At present those who go away pride themselves on their exalted courage and pity those who stay: and those who stay regard themselves as truly pious, and the others as little better than pagans.

PORTA ROMANA,

December 15th.

I have come here in an omnibus from the Piazza Signoria for one penny, and am waiting for the vehicle to start that will take me to the Certosa or Carthusian monastery. The charge is threepence. The car is a sort of covered drag drawn by two horses. I am sitting in it. Three country girls in their hair and cloakless walk past. They have an air and grace fit for a palace. Now two friars in long brown

cloaks pass. A poor man smoking a pipe comes to the door of the car, looks at me, touches his hat, and goes on. We start.

PENSIONE LUCCHESI.

There is not much to say on my journey to the Certosa. The road is not interesting, being much of it enclosed within high walls, and the day was what a friar at the monastery afterwards described as "Inglese." We stopped once for a minute or two, when a mule, drawing a cart which followed us, put his head into our car. I reached my hand to fondle him; but, while allowing the caress, he intimated a preference for conversation by commencing to bray. A lad who was near replied in the same language, and several sentences were interchanged. The mule then turned to a greengrocer's shop which was near, and, having deliberately surveyed several articles, began to eat a head of cabbage. He then smelt at potatoes, beans, artichokes, and other things, and finally decided to regale himself on the chestnuts. After a while the owner of the shop appeared, and the owner of the animal also came up and led him to the centre of the road, where he ate his chestnut, no one reproving him.

The monastery is on a high hill, and resembles a fortress in the height and strength of the surrounding walls. The friar who came to conduct me crossed himself when he saw me. He showed me through innumerable chapels, all very beautiful, cloisters small and great, cells, dining-room, salon. There are two spots from which extended views may be had, but the day was unfavourable. The number of brothers who lived here was fifty. The monastery is under suppression, and the number is now reduced to eighteen. They will die out and another kind of men will succeed them. It is very well to call monks drones; but the question remains, are wasps better? The religious system of the middle ages was Christian in one respect—that it afforded the ease and plenty

of life to the lowly born as well as to those of noble descent. Granting all that is true of monkish indolence and immorality, what comes of it is that the things considered the good things of earth were attainable by all on equal terms. The monk could lead an idle and lazy life as well as the baron. The suppression of convents and monasteries has merely restricted the privilege of leading easy, indulgent lives to the comparatively few powerful ones of earth. Lazarus had escaped for awhile from the dunghill and the dogs, and has been driven back. On grounds of natural justice I cannot see why peasants should not be allowed to live in monasteries—I will not add, and to be immoral—seeing that lords are allowed to live in grand houses and to be immoral to any extent. I am taking very low ground, if the ground of natural justice can be called low. Christ, in the parable of Lazarus and Dives, took very nearly similar ground. Monks *may* become corrupt and no doubt often did, but is it not the almost invariable characteristic of great and wealthy laymen to become corrupt? The offences of what is called the upper class are condoned because they are “pretty Fanny’s way.” Rich men in this respect resemble the man who, having been brought before a judge several times and fined for being drunk, proposed that he should be taken by the year at a reduced rate.

The friar did not cross himself when I gave him a lira at parting.





SOME NOTES ON PREFACES.

BY C. T. TALLENT-BATEMAN.

THE following notes are the outcome of a recent investigation, instituted for a special purpose, among the books on my own shelves. They may—I hope they do—contain something of interest; they will at any rate form an introduction to the suggestion I make at the end of my paper.

Isaac D'Israeli has told us that ordinary book readers skip those what he calls "little elaborate compositions," which form, as he says, the "entrances" to books; whereas he, for his part, "always gathered amusement from a preface, be it awkwardly or skilfully written; for dulness or impertinence may raise a laugh for a page or two. . . . The Italians call the preface 'La Salsa del libro,' the *sauce* of the book, and if well seasoned it creates an appetite in the reader to devour the book itself," while "a preface badly composed prejudices the reader against the work."

If prefaces are but apologies for books, how often are they but apologies for apologies, commencing, as they generally do, with elaborate justifications for their own introduction. One of my books—Dr. Cheevers' *Wanderings of a Pilgrim in the Shadow of Mont Blanc and the Jungfrau Alp*—is introduced by a preface which opens in the following strain:—

A preface is a thing of inconsistencies. Though it comes first in the book, it is last in the author's thoughts; the first thing with the reader, it is the last with the writer and the printer. Though it is the shortest part of the book, it is by far the most difficult. And, though it is no part of the book, it is sometimes the only part read and the longest remembered.

It is always demanded by custom, though oftentimes wholly unnecessary. It is like a visit of ceremony with half an excuse for not calling sooner and half an apology for calling at all.

It is like the title "Esq.," which is no part of any man's name, and yet every man writes it on a letter to his neighbour. It is like notes at the bottom of a page, which, if they contain anything important, had better be put in the body of the work. Finally, it is like standing at the door in a rainstorm and sending in the servant to announce your name.

A preface in the present case might have been spared. . . . But perhaps it may be set down as one of those graces in book life like the touch of your hat to a friend across the street, which softens the manners and does not permit men to be brutes. This doubtless is the philosophy of it, though the etymology intimates that it is simply the art of putting the best face foremost.

Apropos of Cheevers' opening remarks, I would remind you of Dickens' preface to the original edition of *Dombey and Son*, where he says: "Preface. I cannot forego my usual opportunity of saying *farewell* to my readers in this *greeting place*."

Another reverend gentleman (John Clubbe)—part of whose preface to his mock *Antiquities of Wheatfield* I quote hereafter—thus treats of prefaces in general:—

Of all things in the world, says an eminent writer, I hate long prefaces; and afterwards gives us two and forty of large quarto pages in his own. The impetuosity of his genius ran away with him, and if it seems a little contradictory, his excellent observations make us ample amends for his prolixity.

Prefaces as well as dedications are of modern invention; and their first use was rather laudable, as they served, like a bill of fare, to give us previous notice of our entertainment.

But now-a-days they consist chiefly of apologies for the cook (the author). One tells us that he hath neither leisure nor abilities; another that he is in great haste. But of what service are these apologies to us when we have paid for a tasteless ordinary. One talks of his pains and labour, and another of the intolerable heat of the kitchen, &c.

But, if authors think their works really want so much apology, why do they write at all? for though to beg pardon when we have offended is ingenuous and praiseworthy, yet it is much more so not to offend at all.

Books that stand in need of long prefaces are seldom worth reading, for they generally undertake to explain passages in the work which should there have been correct, or such as are really inexplicable, and sometimes to make plain what is too plain and dunstable already.

Prefaces are sometimes written for the benefit of the booksellers, who often complain of the length of a work without one; for some men will not buy a book because there is not a short way to come at some knowledge of it; for how, as Mr. Prior says, can men give their "opinion of twenty books, yet never look in one?" For we must take the poet in this sense, that they look into prefaces, which is next to not reading at all.

Prefaces make apparently many *general* scholars, as a close application to indexes makes *universal*.

Most prefaces begin with courteous, gentle, or candid reader; but few men are caught by such flattering appellations. Some, out of good nature, may perhaps purchase the book, but no one will think himself thereby bound to read it.

The younger Hazlitt, in his preface to the rare and valuable book printed (in 1874) at the expense of Mr. Henry Huth, and known as *Prefaces, Dedications and Epistles selected from Early English Books, 1540-1701* (of which work only fifty copies were printed, and those only for private circulation), says:

A series of these "fore-words," as it is now the fashion to term them, bear somewhat the same relation to a series of the entire tracts as a portico bears to a dwelling; we survey the one, and form our judgment of the interior and its inmates; while, after a perusal of the preface, we get at some knowledge of the book and its author, tempting us to go farther, or else leading us to retrace our steps.

Again—

Prefaces, dedications, and the like generally constitute the only portions of a book where the author, or more especially the mere editor, has an opportunity of casting aside his (so to speak) official reserve, and admitting us to a glimpse of his individuality.

It will be remembered that the following *jeu d'esprit* is recorded in *Curiosities of Literature*:—

On a very elegant preface, prefixed to an ill-written book, it was observed that they ought never to have come together; but a sarcastic wit remarked that he considered such marriages were allowable, for they were not of kin!

I have met with several metrical prefaces, the most

charming, in my opinion, of which is a Manchester one—that prefixed to our own Charles Swain's *Beauties of the Mind*:—

Voice of the human heart ! Thou voice divine !—
 Firstborn of love and beauty—Poesy !
 Once more I bend, a votary at thy shrine ;
 My wild-flower wreaths I dedicate to thee :
 And all ungraced and simple as they be,
 Embalm their leaves and they shall ne'er decay ;
 But live, a token and a memory,
 With those I love, when I am far away,
 And set—for ever set—my young life's fleeting day !

Ben Jonson prefaces his translation of Mateo Aleman's *Spanish Rogue* (1623) with verses beginning—

Who tracks this author's or translator's pen
 Shall finde that either hath read bookes and men ;

and ending—the person addressed being the original author—

When you beholde me wish myselfe the man
 That would have done that which you only can.

BEN JONSON.

A Lancashire lady, Miss Emily S. Holt, begins one of her books, *Ye Olden Time*, as follows :—

Introductions and prefaces, while sometimes very necessary and valuable to those who know how to appreciate them, are often very dry in the eyes of the general reader. Some writers, however, have shown themselves able to enliven even a dry subject, as Dr. Arbuthnot, in his *Table of Ancient Coins, Weights and Measures*, amused his readers by remarking that “the polite Augustus, the emperor of the world, had neither any glass in his windows nor a shirt to his back.”

Perhaps the driest of all books are law books, and yet I find among the prefaces to the ancient legal works on my bookshelves many a touch of humour, and of pathos, and of eloquence. One of the driest of these dry books is undoubtedly that extremely technical work known as *Sheppard's Touchstone*, the full title of which is *The Touchstone of Common Assurances; or, a Plain and Familiar Treatise Opening the Learning of the Common Assurances or*

Conveyances of the Kingdom, written by an eminent conveyancer of the Middle Temple during the reign of Charles the First and the Commonwealth.

To the original edition (dated 1651), a copy of which I possess, of this important book is a preface or address to the reader, which contains several interesting passages. The author begins by confiding to us his having, before publishing, consulted his "more judicious (!) friends" and of his having been "encouraged by some and not discouraged by others." He then proceeds as follows:—

And considering withall the mischief arising everywhere by the rash adventures of sundry ignorant men that meddle so much in these weighty matters [the law and practice of conveyancing], there being now almost in every parish an unlearned, and yet confident pragmaticall attorney (not that I thinke them all to be such) or a lawless Scrivener, that may perhaps have some law books in their houses, but never read more law then is on the backside of *Littleton*; or an ignorant Vicar, or it may be a Blacksmith, Carpenter, or Weaver, that have no more bookes of law in their houses then they have law in their heads, and yet as apt and able (if you will beleeve themselves) either to Judge of a Conveyance and by the rules of law (of all which they are utterly ignorant) to determine of the strength and goodness of a title . . . or to make a Conveyance . . . as the most learned and best Counsellor of them all, and therefore undertake with great confidence and despatch without any scruple any business whatsoever offered to their hands.

Later in his long preface he uses the following sayings, which he prints as quotations:—

Let them alone the blind leaders of the blind.

To abide in the calling wherein they are called.

Ne sutor ultra crepidam—Let not the cobbler go beyond his last.

Our author further says:

For the more men know the less they think they know, and the more they doubt; and nothing moves men to be so bold and confident in these matters as their ignorance, according to the proverb—"Who so bold as blind Bayard?"

He winds up with a blow at his anticipated critics—

And if any man have anything else to object and except (for there are that will neither put forth their own strength to do good, nor bear with others that do so) I wish them to undertake the same subject, and to perfect and supply my defects.

Charles Lamb (*Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading*) says :

I can read anything which I call a *book*. There are things in that shape which I cannot allow for such. In this catalogue of *books which are no books*—biblia a-biblia—I reckon Court Calendars, Directories, Pocket Books, Draught-Boards bound and lettered on the back, Scientific Treatises, Almanacks, Statutes at Large: the works of Hume, Gibbon, Robertson, Beattie, Soame, Jenyns, and generally all those volumes which no gentleman's library should be without.

Yet it is from two works on one of these subjects—Statutes at Large—that I propose to quote a couple of prefaces.

Ferdinando Pulton, of Lincoln's Inn, a law writer, *temp.* Elizabeth and James I., is credited (or debited) with the publication of numerous law books, but only one of which, according to Lowndes, is known to be extant, viz., *Kalendar or Table comprehending the Effect of all the Statutes, &c.*—a black-letter work, of which I have a beautifully-printed copy, printed in 1606 for "the Company of Stationers," in which he introduces his "unbookly" subject by a reference to "Almightie God" having "with divers miraculous Plagues punished the land of Aegypt, for his people of Israel's sake, carried them through the red sea, drowned therein King *Pharaoh* and his Hoast, sweetned the bitter waters for them to drinke, and sent them food from Heaven, and brought them by a cloudie Pillar in the day, and a fierie pillar in the night, untill they came to Mount Sinai: Hee there gave them divers commaundments;" and, continuing in a very eloquent and classical strain, concludes by a grandiloquent metaphor in which, after picturing the earthly Judge being brought before the "omnipotent censor . . . by whom Kings doe raigne, and Law-makers discerne that is just . . . for he at whose presence the pillars of heaven will tremble and the foundation of the earthe will quake . . . will summon another Parliament, appoint a new Tribunall, and sit upon the Rainebow in judgment himselfe . . . and

there in the presence of God, of angels and men, will pronounce a most just and upright sentence and irrevocable Decree, of the validitie of all Lawes and of the intention of each Law-maker, and assigne to them Judgment in weight, and Justice in measure whose Judgment no writ of error will reverse, nor whose verdict any Attainder can undoe."

Before leaving Pulton I would introduce what is—if Lowndes and others are right—a unique copy of Pulton's work on a slightly different subject. The copy is dated 1581, and has a portion of an old illuminated parchment MS. of the New Testament interleaved as part of the binding. The preface to this book begins with a learned history of the law institutions of the early classical nations of Europe, and also contains many rather flowery passages. In my copy of the original authoritative edition of Hale's famous *Pleas of the Crown* is a MS. reference to another of Pulton's works of which I can find no trace of an existing copy.

Another law writer (the compiler or editor of *Termes de la Ley*, 1667) concludes his preface in the following appropriate words, which might form the introduction to any book: "That I intended well, I can give you but my word; how I have performed I make my Reader Judge."

A quaint preface I find in a book printed in London in 1641, Skene's *De verborum significatione: The Exposition of the Termes and Difficill Wordes contained in the foure Buiks of Regiam Majestatem*. I will only give you the concluding sentence:—

Reade therefore and make thy profite of gud thinges. Correct modestlie al errorrs quhilks are ignorant, and nocht wilfull. Eik al necessities omitted. Cut awaie al superfluities adjected. And quhateuer thou doe esteeme of me, as I doe of thee and of al, to quhais knowledge, this my little labour sal happen to cum.

While on the subject of law books, I would refer you to the remarkable preface to a continental work on the law of

the separate rights of women, published in 1685; the eccentricity of the preface being chiefly typographical, for instance, the type is so large and the pages so narrow that in some cases a line is not sufficient to contain even one complete word.

The Rev. John Clubbe thus prefaces his mock *History and Antiquities of the Ancient Villa of Wheatfield in the County of Suffolk*, written (it will be remembered) during the last century :—

It is a customary respect generally paid to the reader to give him by way of preface some account of the book he has been at the expense of purchasing and purposes to be at the trouble of reading. I call it respect, in concert with my fellow-writers, but I do not in the least desire him to entertain a more favourable opinion either of my manners or of my regard for him from this circumstance; for I must confess we durst not hazard our works into the world absolutely upon their own bottom, but are obliged previously to point out the beauties, &c., lest they should not strike the reader so forcibly as perhaps they have us, the author or editor.

In Greene's *Vision* (date 1593), of which only one copy is known (see Collier's *Bibliographical Catalogue*, i. 337-9), the poet gives us a preface full of quaint humour. The following may give you some slight idea of his style :—

Hee that commeth in Print setteth himselfe up as a common marke for every one to shoote at: I have shotte at many abuses, over shotte myselfe in describing of some: when truth failed, my invention hath stood my friend.

In conclusion, may I make a suggestion?

Mr. Hazlitt, in his preface before cited, after pointing out the scarcity of reprint collections of old prefaces, insists that "a benefit may be conferred on literature, and even on biography and history, by rendering somewhat more accessible a tolerably copious selection of Introductory Notices and other prolegomena attached to the rarer old English books published in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries." The material of the book he thus introduces was derived almost exclusively from one library. What could not almost every book lover do to extend the collection of

separately republished prefaces, especially of those which are valuable and interesting by reason of their richness in personal record, or homely wisdom, or of their quaintness, humour, or eloquence? Is it not worth the while of each bookworm to ransack at leisure his library, and to make notes of those books which contain the more important prefaces?



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